

DR. RICHARD PRICE, THE MARQUIS DE CONDORCET, AND THE POLITICAL  
CULTURE OF FRIENDSHIP IN THE LATE ENLIGHTENMENT

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The eighteenth century saw many innovations in political culture including the rise of the public sphere where political ideas were freely and openly discussed and criticized. The new public sphere arose within the institutions of private life such as the Republic of Letters and salons, so the modes of behavior in private life were important influences on the new political culture of the public sphere. By studying the lives and careers of Richard Price and the Marquis de Condorcet, I examine the role that the private institution of friendship played in the new political culture of the late Enlightenment. During the 1780s, friendship became an important political symbol that represented the enlightened ideals of equality, reciprocity, liberty, and humanitarianism.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION: SOCIABILITY, FRIENDSHIP, AND THE REPUBLIC OF LETTERS.....	1
2. RICHARD PRICE: PRIVATE FRIENDSHIP, PUBLIC VIRTUE, AND THE EMPIRE OF PEACE.....	23
3. CONDORCET AND THE SOCIAL ART OF FRIENDSHIP.....	57
4. CONCLUSION.....	84
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	93

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION: SOCIABILITY, FRIENDSHIP, AND THE REPUBLIC OF LETTERS

In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, Jürgen Habermas refers to the rise of a critical public sphere in the eighteenth century, with its use of publicity and public opinion, as one of the great innovations in modern political culture.<sup>1</sup> He argues that the Republic of Letters came to constitute the public sphere, which became a forum for political discourse that contested the closed political culture of monarchy. Debate over public policy was no longer relegated strictly to the private and secretive realm of the monarch and court; rather, a public had formed that now publicly debated and criticized governmental policy. This new public sphere did not, of course, include all, or even most, eighteenth-century people; rather the new critical public sphere comprised a literate and educated public and thus was necessarily limited. This new public—that is, the Republic of Letters—claimed, however, to represent the whole public. The republic further claimed to be the only true representative of the public because only it represented the universal interests of truth and humanity, rather than particular interests.<sup>2</sup> The Republic of Letters thus attempted to use and manipulate the new device of public opinion to affect public policy.

The public sphere had been transformed, but this new public sphere, separate from the state, arose in places that fostered private sociability such as the salons,

coffeehouses, and especially the Republic of Letters. Private sociability thereby gave rise to the public sphere, and the two spheres became intricately linked. In particular, the Republic of Letters became recognized as the authentic public sphere, because it represented the universal goals of truth and humanity.<sup>3</sup> So, as Dena Goodman argues, the Republic of Letters arose as its own kind of polity; it had its own politics with its own rules of governance, its own governors,—or as she argues, governesses—and ultimately its own political culture that challenged the absolutist political culture. Goodman asserts that “The Republic of Letters emerges as a polity parallel to the monarchy but entwined with it: the double helix of early modern France.”<sup>4</sup>

Because the Republic of Letters first grew out of the private lives of the men of letters, the cultural practices of those men’s private lives became an important part in the formation of the new political culture. As a result, the history of the private lives of the men and women of the Enlightenment is important in understanding the formative influences of the new political culture of the Enlightenment’s Republic of Letters. It is the goal of this thesis to show that friendship was one aspect of private life that took on great importance during the Enlightenment, and that friendship became an important part of the new political culture, especially during the late Enlightenment. To this end, I examine the eighteenth-century men and women of letters’ conception of friendship, not simply friendship as a unit idea but friendship as a cultural and social construction, as well as an intellectual construction.

In attempting to understand the role of friendship in eighteenth-century sociability, I examine the lives and thoughts of two thinkers: Richard Price, a Briton, and

the Marquis de Condorcet, a Frenchman. Both men were great intellectuals, and they both had well-developed philosophies upon which contemporaries often commented, so their thoughts regarding friendship are easily discerned—although neither man necessarily had a philosophy of friendship per se. The two men’s lives, however, give just as many historical clues as their written thoughts, especially when investigating the ostensibly private concerns of friendship. Indeed the habit and tedium of daily life often provide a more thorough and truthful demonstration of the manner in which people truly relate to their fellow beings. As Roger Chartier states: “An approach in terms of cultural sociology opens a large range of practices that must be taken into consideration: not only clear and well-elaborated thoughts but also unmediated and embodied representations; not only voluntary and reasoned engagements but also automatic and obligatory loyalties.”<sup>5</sup>

Price and Condorcet were both representative of the men of letters who constituted the international Republic of Letters in the eighteenth century. Both men were cosmopolitan in outlook and had friends and correspondents around the world. Both men were steeped in the politics of their day and both men were surrounded by a circle of intimate friends. Both men were also actively involved in associations that fostered sociability and friendship as a political instrument. For example, Price was a leading member of the London Revolution Society, which fostered friendship with French Jacobin clubs during the French Revolution. And Condorcet used friendship as a political instrument in his almost countless number of political pamphlets. As members of the international Republic of Letters, Price and Condorcet provide interesting

examples and useful case studies of the relationship between the Enlightenment and friendship.

A dissenting minister and a radical Whig, Price provoked the earliest debate over the meaning of the French Revolution with a sermon that he gave to the London Revolution Society on 4 November 1789—a sermon later published as a pamphlet titled *A Discourse on the Love of our Country*.<sup>6</sup> With the sermon, Price vehemently attacked the British monarchy and praised the French Revolution as a great advance for humanity; he also offered his own definition of country as “not the soil . . . on which we happen to have been born” but “that body of companions and friends who are associated with us.”<sup>7</sup> But what was most provocative was a short speech that he gave that same night at a dinner put on by the society. Price offered a formal congratulations to the National Assembly of France and stated his hope that the French Revolution would encourage people everywhere to assert their rights. This address provoked Edmund Burke’s famous *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.

Condorcet, who admired Price,<sup>8</sup> was both a philosophe and a revolutionary. Condorcet was the last major philosophe of the Enlightenment and the only major philosophe to see the Revolution, which makes him an especially interesting case study. But in many ways Condorcet—who is most famous for his *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind*, which he wrote as a fugitive from the Revolution—was representative of the whole Enlightenment. He more than anyone else was in the unique position to bring the totality of the Enlightenment together in one work, which is just what he did with the *Sketch*. Charles Frankel states it best when he asserts

that “no book so well reveals the climate of opinion of the French Enlightenment as Condorcet’s *Progress of the Human Mind*.”<sup>9</sup> In that work, Condorcet summarized the progress of the human mind over the course of human history; but in doing so, he also laid out a plan for his own theory of progress that entailed a world of closer, more intimate human relationships. He called on “all enlightened men” to join together as “friends of humanity” in order to spread enlightenment, perfection, and happiness.<sup>10</sup> So both Price and Condorcet considered friendship to be an important aspect of both politics and enlightenment.

By examining the lives and thoughts of Price and Condorcet, I have effectively chosen to focus on the late Enlightenment. The late Enlightenment—approximately from the year 1778, the year of the deaths of Rousseau and Voltaire, until the French Revolution, or essentially the 1780s—is particularly appropriate, because during that period, the political rhetoric of friendship came into its most widespread use. Directly reflecting the influence of Rousseau and his increasing popularity, the philosophes of the late Enlightenment increasingly emphasized passion and sentiment. In many ways the 1780s was also a decade of transition from the Enlightenment to the Revolution, so an examination of friendship and its changing political uses may also hint at possible connections between the periods, or at least the cultural process that made the Revolution possible.<sup>11</sup> Infused with the radicalizing influences of passion and sentiment, the intellectuals and political radicals of the late Enlightenment exploited the passion and sentiment of the time by infusing the language of the deeply personal relationship of friendship into their political rhetoric.



Both Price and Condorcet considered themselves to be “friends of liberty.” That friendship and the changing nature of friendship were important in the eighteenth century is self-evident from the linguistic, semantic, and rhetorical uses of the words “friend” and “friendship” in the political discourse of the time. The men and women of the Enlightenment understood that words had the power to shape human consciousness, and so they used words with an acute consciousness with the hope of transforming their society. Thus, an examination of words is necessary for a greater appreciation of both the culture of the Enlightenment and the project of the Enlightenment.<sup>12</sup> The British radicals of the late eighteenth century, Price included, often referred to themselves as the “friends of liberty.” Likewise, the French philosophes, including Condorcet, often referred to themselves as “*amis de la liberté*” or, more typically, as “*amis de la humanité*.” Both Price and Condorcet consciously invoked the semantics of friendship and thereby infused the rhetoric of friendship into political discourse. The term “friend of liberty” captures the spirit of both the public sphere and private life. “Liberty” evokes a sense of freedom from arbitrary government, while “friend” evokes a sense of personal intimacy based upon a free, personal relationship of loyalty, duty, and consent. So by combining the two words into the single expression “friends of liberty,” or “*amis de la liberté*,” the eighteenth-century men of letters semantically and symbolically combined the public sphere of free discourse with the private sphere of friendship. Thus the two spheres were intricately linked in the political discourse of the eighteenth century.

Friendship was much more than just rhetoric, it also gave real meaning and substance to the lives of the men and women of the late Enlightenment. But the

conceptualization of friendship that the philosophes came to embrace was vastly different from the friendship of early modern Europe. Friendship, along with almost all aspects of private life, had undergone dramatic changes during the early modern period, and these changes accelerated during the eighteenth century. During the early modern period, friendships were a common, essential part of daily survival, as friends were called upon and indeed relied upon in all aspects of daily life. Thus daily contact, close association, and necessity, along with familial and other personal ties, determined early modern friendship, which was also limited by one's status. Friendship was simply a tool born out of kinship, proximity, and self-interest that was used to ease the burden of daily life in early modern Europe.<sup>13</sup> Early modern friendship among the elites and at the courts of Europe was also utilitarian. People at court used friendship as political capital to gain access to power—connections of friendship provided proximity to the monarch. Friendship was part of the political and personal intrigue that was calculated for the sole, self-interested purpose of gaining power. Indeed, friendship was power.<sup>14</sup> But new views of the autonomy of the individual and the sanctity of the inner self fomented, and with them arose new views of friendship. Friendship connoted a sphere of freedom along with a perfect reciprocity. A true and perfect friendship was equally and freely consented to by both friends, and each equally reciprocated the loyalties and duties of the relationship. But most importantly, the new friendship that fomented in the eighteenth century was a voluntary association predicated upon love, rather than utility,<sup>15</sup> and so friendship became more meaningful as individuals increased their emotional involvement in friendships and incorporated those friendships into their own identity.

The philosophes idealized this new form of friendship and its values of freedom, equality, reciprocity, goodwill, and the absence of self-interest. The philosophes used the language of friendship in attempting to effect a community based upon these values of friendship on both a national and international level. Finally, I argue that it was the project of Enlightenment to effect an international Republic of Friends that would perpetuate enlightenment and peace among all people. The Enlightenment was ultimately the project of transforming the new political public into a public of friends. Thus, an understanding of different constructions of friendship is vital to fully understanding the new political culture of the eighteenth century.

New understandings of friendship also spawned an important literary form in the late eighteenth century. Literature in 1780-1800 became more familiar. In France, writers increasingly used “*tu*” the familiar form of “you” rather than the formal “*vous*.” Readers and writers developed a more intimate relationship, without any intrusive intermediaries. Readers became friends with a commitment to the text and to the authors. So writers, particularly novelists, forged an intimate friendship with readers in order to propagate Enlightenment. The new literary forms merged the public and private spheres in fiction, while authors used printing to reach the public and new literary techniques that appealed to readers through friendship.<sup>16</sup>

Although friendship was indeed an important part of the political discourse in the late eighteenth century, it came to its most complete meaning within the Republic of Letters, which was defined by its practices of sociability, including friendship. Therefore, to understand the cultural practices of friendship, it is first necessary to

consider the broader cultural practices and values of sociability that the republic sought to instill upon the rest of the world. Daniel Gordon discusses the importance of sociability, which he defines as “egalitarian interaction among individuals with different corporate standing,”<sup>17</sup> in French thought during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century; and though Gordon discusses sociability within a French context, his conceptualization is useful in understanding sociability as a whole in the eighteenth century. Gordon argues that during the Enlightenment the philosophes, with no political rights in the French absolutist state, invested great significance and meaning in their private lives. Excluded from public life, they created a cult of society in which they idealized the private life of sociable people as superior to public life. In this exalted private life, they practiced their own ideals of sociability and polite discussion.<sup>18</sup> Gordon claims that Enlightenment thinkers began to see sociability as the defining characteristic of human existence.<sup>19</sup> Sociability also had a set of norms, if not rules, meant to facilitate egalitarian interactions among persons of all social classes. Reciprocity was perhaps the most important norm of sociability; it allowed each individual to participate equally in conversation. No matter one’s social standing, polite discussion had to allow each person equal opportunity to speak.<sup>20</sup> Finally, sociability was predicated upon humane treatment of others, and with this humane sociability, the philosophes began to see “the possibility of sociability displacing sovereign authority as the source of order in human life.”<sup>21</sup>

Gordon makes clear that the philosophes were not radical revolutionaries in favor of democracy over the hierarchical French structure. Rather, he argues that they were quite comfortable within French absolutism.<sup>22</sup> The philosophes hoped, he claims, to

prove that “individuals naturally cluster into peaceful and durable systems of interaction.”<sup>23</sup> Gordon traces the idea of sociability back to natural law theory, and he argues that Hobbes brought sociability into the heart of modern natural law. Hobbes thought that humanity was by nature unsociable. Men’s individual wills had to be brought under a single, absolute sovereign power because individuals always have a desire to be better than others, and those human beings are a constant threat to collective stability—that is, without a single, absolute authority.<sup>24</sup> Hobbes did not, of course, go uncontested. Gordon points to the Chevalier de Ramsay who wrote the *Essai philosophique sur le gouvernement civil*. In his *Essai*, Ramsay claimed that humans do in fact have a latent sociability. Men have a natural inclination for association that leads to “a mutual commerce of friendship;” however, men also have passions that are capable of leading to social destruction, so a strong state was needed to secure that men’s passions are held in check and to secure peace and fellowship. Finally, Gordon argues that the idea of sociability arose in contrast to Hobbes’s natural law theory, and as a result, the new idea of latent sociability justified absolutism.<sup>25</sup>

Nicolas Delamare, a commissary of the Paris police under Louis XIV, fully articulated the connection between absolutism and latent sociability in his three-volume work, the *Traité de la police*, published between 1705-1719. Delamare argued that within a state there are many conflicting interests, and that in a well-policed state, it is necessary to have a strong monarch capable of preserving the community’s existence, since ultimately the community is better together than separate. But perhaps most interesting is the linguistic origin of Delamare’s use of the word *policé*, which he used to

mean polished, refined, cultivated, and advanced. *Polité* also, however, had connotations of Aristotle's *polis*, which had "moral overtones" of not merely "preservation of life but for the living of a moral life of friendship, communication, and political autonomy." So sociability came of age in the most absolutist of states because absolutism allowed for men to come together in an orderly manner to participate in the natural, albeit latent, sociability that helped to foster the deeper moral life.<sup>26</sup>

Clearly sociability had its roots in absolutism, but those roots also used classical connotations of the *polis*. To be sure, Aristotle did refer to man as a "political animal." Aristotle argued that "it is manifest that the city is among the things that exist by nature, that a human being is by nature a political animal, and that anyone who is cityless by nature and not by chance is either of a depraved sort or better than a human being."<sup>27</sup> Eighteenth-century thinkers slowly rediscovered the ancients as sociable people,<sup>28</sup> so the ancients influenced Enlightenment thinkers' conceptions of enlightened friendship.

Aristotle devoted two books of his *Ethics* to friendship, and with those two books, Aristotle shaped much of the Enlightenment's intellectual construction of friendship.<sup>29</sup> For Aristotle, friendship was a virtue and absolutely necessary for individuals to obtain happiness, but friendship was also at the center of political life. To be sure, Aristotle thought that:

Friendship also seems to be the bond that holds communities together, and lawgivers seem to attach more importance to it than to justice; because concord seems to be something like friendship, and concord is their primary object – that and eliminating faction, which is enmity. Between friends there is no need for justice, but people who are just still need the quality of friendship; and indeed friendliness is considered to be justice in the fullest sense. . . . What is more, people think that good men and friends are the same.<sup>30</sup>

Friendship is based on community, and “all communities,” including communities of friendship, “are like parts of the political community” in that they unite for a common purpose and are willing to unite and sacrifice as one for that common purpose.<sup>31</sup>

Moreover, political institutions are simply models of friendship writ large between rulers and the ruled. Monarchy is the best political constitution only when the monarch acts as a friend of his subjects, and acts out of beneficence and goodwill and regarding the interests of all of his subjects. When the monarch does not act as such, a state of tyranny exists: “For in a tyranny there is little or no friendship.”<sup>32</sup>

Perfect friendship, however, is the purest form of community, because the community of friendship is based upon love for fellow members of the community. Aristotle stated that: “In friendship loving is more important than being loved,” and “loving is the distinctive virtue of friends.”<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, goodwill is friendship only when reciprocated, so a true community of friends is one in which all its members equally “desire the good of their friends for the friends’ sake.”<sup>34</sup> Any friendship based on anything other than goodwill, for instance utility, is thus corrupt. So, Aristotle explained that there can never be friendship between states that have mutual alliances because it is simply a utilitarian relationship.<sup>35</sup>

For Aristotle, friendship was also a binding force for community because friends maintain a sense of love and devotion for each other even at great distances: Friends “separated by distance, although they do not express their friendship in action, nevertheless retain the disposition to do so; because distance does not break off a friendship absolutely, but only in its active realization.”<sup>36</sup> Friendship is the ideal bond of

community because it requires equality, reciprocity, and love toward one's fellow citizens, and friendship is capable of transcending spatial and territorial limits—that is, friendship can be maintained even lacking the immediacy of daily contact. But perhaps above all else, friendship is good because it leads to improvement of men: “But the friendship of the good is good, and increases in goodness because of their association. They seem even to become better men by exercising their friendship and improving each other; for the traits that they admire in each other get transferred to themselves.”<sup>37</sup>

As Aristotle was the most important ancient thinker for the formation of the ideas of friendship for the men of the Enlightenment, so was Michel de Montaigne the most important modern to shape the philosophes' intellectual construction of friendship.<sup>38</sup> Montaigne began his essay, “Of Friendship,” with the proposition that “there is nothing to which nature seems so much to have inclined us, as to society.”<sup>39</sup> He thereby asserted that men are naturally sociable, and friendship plays a significant role in that natural sociability. Friendship is not just a relationship of convenience or utility; friendship feeds a man's spirituality and makes the soul grow more refined<sup>40</sup>—Montaigne did indeed mean man, because women, he believed, are too frivolous to participate in true friendship.<sup>41</sup>

Friendship is also the greatest manifestation of liberty. Relationships between parents and children are relationships “that the law and natural obligation impose upon us, so much less is there of our own choice and voluntary freedom; whereas that voluntary liberty of ours has no production more promptly and properly than affection and friendship.”<sup>42</sup> Friendship provides an ideal of a community formed out of liberty,



free will, consent, and reciprocity. And indeed Montaigne went on to state that an ideal community of two friends “is indivisible” because “each one gives himself so entirely to his friend, that he has nothing left to distribute.”<sup>43</sup> But Montaigne assumed, as did Aristotle, that a friendship must necessarily be of a limited scale so as to provide greater intimacy. But the Enlightenment intellectuals contested Montaigne’s and Aristotle’s notions that friendship had to be limited in number. The philosophes held up the ideals of friendship—liberty, equality, reciprocity, and goodwill—as the ideal values for community; however, the philosophes saw no reason why these values had to be limited to a small, intimate community. It thus became the project of the Enlightenment to effect a community of friends on a larger national, and even international, scale.

Aristotle and Montaigne were the two most important thinkers in the shaping of the men of letters’ intellectual construction of friendship, but the social and cultural practices and values of sociability within the Republic of Letters were the most formative influence in shaping the Enlightenment thinkers’ cultural and social constructions of friendship. As Dena Goodman argues, it was “the desire to change the world to conform to the Republic of Letters, its values and practices” that was ultimately “the project of Enlightenment.” So it is first important to consider the values of the Republic of Letters. Above all else, the republic and “its citizenry came to value reciprocal exchange based on a model of friendship that contrasted markedly with the absolutist state, corporate society, and the family.” The citizens of the Republic of Letters thus had dual allegiance, to the public sphere of state authority and to the authentic public sphere of their sociable republic.<sup>44</sup>

By examining the cultural construction and practices of friendship within the Republic of Letters, we can better understand the Enlightenment, the eighteenth century, and even the French Revolution. As Goodman contends: “The Enlightenment comes alive as a social and discursive activity in which men and women participated in ways that reflected the broadly cultural values of the Republic of Letters and the new imperatives that they themselves constructed as the project of Enlightenment.”<sup>45</sup> The project of the Enlightenment was to change the world to conform to the Republic of Letters’ own values, and friendship was of primary importance to the republic as a social activity and a cultural value. The citizens of the Republic of Letters were not loyal to a government but to a set of values and practices and friendship was one of those values, so loyalty to friendship became more important than to anything else. The republic’s cultural and discursive practices ossified the values of friendship for its members. For instance, the republic’s emphasis on polite conversation gave priority to the interest of the group over the individual. Individuals were required to place greater concern with not upsetting the group dynamic rather than the individual shining at the cost of the discomfort of the group. And it was furthermore through politeness that the republic overcame the status groups of traditional society.<sup>46</sup>

Women in particular found the Republic of Letters to be a refuge against the patriarchal and absolutist relations that characterized French society. The republic and its Enlightenment salons were a community of friends that overcame the traditional cultural, social, and sexual classifications. The salonnière Julie-Jeanne-Eléanore de Lespinasse, a

close friend of Condorcet, especially found the republic a refuge of friendship.

Lepinasse wrote to Condorcet:

I, who have known only pain and suffering, I, who have been the victim of viciousness and tyranny for ten years, I, finally, who am without fortune, who have lost my health, and who have experienced only atrocities from people from whom I should have been able to expect comfort, and who, by means of a singularity unheard of, have had a childhood agitated by the very care that was taken to exercise and exalt my sensibility, I knew terror, fright, before having been able to think and judge. Consider, my good Condorcet, if I am justified in my small degree of attachment for life and if my disgust for all that men hold dear, the pleasures of dissipation and of vanity, cannot be justified. I know only one pleasure, I have but one interest, that of friendship.<sup>47</sup>

As the example of Lepinasse shows, friendship was not merely an ideological and rhetorical instrument, rather friendship gave meaning to the lives of the men and women of the Enlightenment; and in giving meaning to their lives, the private institution of friendship shaped the Enlightenment's political language and its political program. The men and women of the Enlightenment saw in themselves and their own society of letters a new hope for society as a whole. Diderot in particular, Goodman notes, would have had the society of men of letters bound together by ties of goodwill and a common concern for the good of humanity, rather than any particular interest. Certainly not all of the philosophes agreed with this, but at least Diderot thought that making people better human beings was just as important as making them less ignorant. For Diderot, the search for knowledge, including his own project of the encyclopedia, should be subordinated to the greater good of society.<sup>48</sup> And Duclos asked in 1750 that "men be taught to love one another," as well as just taught knowledge.<sup>49</sup>

Both Price and Condorcet have often been accused of being simplistic utopians, but both men realized the destructive impulses of passion and its possible danger to

humanity. But they sought to redirect that passion into a passion for humanity. Price and Condorcet essentially agreed with Diderot, and they, along with many eighteenth-century men of letters, saw friendship as an institution to improve men morally, as well as intellectually. They sought to change men's motivations for action rather than simply to set up political institutions to control passions. Frankel notes, referring to Condorcet, that "he was only too aware that non-intellectual factors had played, and were continuing to play, roles in human history."<sup>50</sup> Frankel further notes that Condorcet often "sounded like Rousseau, asking for a change of heart. The difference was that Condorcet seemed to take a change of heart as 'reasonable.'"<sup>51</sup> In short, Condorcet was asking for friendship.

Friendship formed a significant part of the lives of the men and women of the Republic of Letters. Friendship was not just an ancillary amusement, rather friendship had real meaning as a culturally, socially, and intellectually constructed institution based upon duty, loyalty, reciprocity, equality, selflessness, humanity, and love of others. Friendship formed a large part of the philosophes' efforts "to change the world to conform to the Republic of Letters." As I show with Price and Condorcet, the eighteenth-century men and women of letters sought not only to change the values of society but to make fundamental changes in the way people relate to their fellow human beings by attempting to transform political society to a friendship-based society. To this end, the goal of Enlightenment was not just to reform political institutions to regulate human beings, but fundamentally to change human beings' motivations for their actions, and that entailed creating a society based upon a model of friendship as found in the Republic of Letters and its institutions of intellectual sociability. The Republic of Letters

was a Republic of Friends; it was a republic that based citizenship upon free and friendly consent. The Republic of Friends took private friendship and made it a public institution, and in doing so, the republic not only gave itself as an example of a political society, but also sought to represent the public. Finally, the Enlightenment intellectuals hoped to transform the political culture of their time with their public uses of the previously private institution of friendship.

Ferdinando Galiani gave perhaps the best statement of the importance of friendship in the Enlightenment in a letter he wrote to André Morrellet during the bitter *guerre des farines* that threatened to destroy the Republic of Letters. Galiani began with the biblical proverb “*Non in solo pane vivit homo*,” and he immediately followed it with the enlightened proverb “*Pour moi, je ne vis que d’amitié*.”<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, translated by Thomas Burger with the assistance of Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1989).

<sup>2</sup> Dena Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1994), 33.

<sup>3</sup> Dena Goodman, "Public Sphere and Private Life: Toward a Synthesis of Current Historiographical Approaches to the Old Regime," *History and Theory* 31 (1992): 1-20.

<sup>4</sup> Goodman, *Republic of Letters*, 1-2.

<sup>5</sup> Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Origins of the French Revolution*, translated by Lydia G. Cochrane (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), 6.

<sup>6</sup> The Revolution Society of London, or the London Revolution Society, met annually on 4 November to celebrate the Glorious Revolution of 1688. 4 November was the birthday of William III.

<sup>7</sup> Richard Price, *A Discourse on the Love of our Country*, in *Political Writings*, edited by D. O. Thomas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 178.

<sup>8</sup> Antoine-Nicolas de Condorcet, *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind*, translated by June Barraclough with an introduction by Stuart Hampshire (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1955), 142.

<sup>9</sup> Charles Frankel, *The Faith of Reason: The Idea of Progress in the French Enlightenment* (New York: Octagon Books, 1948, 1969), 128.

<sup>10</sup> Condorcet, *Sketch*, 9-10.

<sup>11</sup> For a discussion of the Enlightenment as a cultural process that created the preconditions necessary for the French Revolution, see Chartier, *Cultural Origins*.

<sup>12</sup> Daniel Gordon, *Citizens without Sovereignty: Equality and Sociability in French Thought, 1670-1789* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 44-48; also see Keith Baker, *Inventing the French Revolution: Essays on French Political Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 4-11.

<sup>13</sup> Maurice Aymard, "Friends and Neighbors," in *Passions of the Renaissance*, edited by Roger Chartier and translated by Arthur Goldhammer, vol. 3 of *A History of Private Life*, edited by Philippe Ariès and George Duby (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 447-56.

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 458-66.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 447-91.

<sup>16</sup> Malcolm Cook, "Addressing the Public in Eighteenth-Century French Fiction," in *Shifting the Boundaries: Transformation of the Languages of Public and Private in the Eighteenth Century*, edited by Dario Castiglione and Lesley Sharpe (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1995), 41-53; for a discussion of the ways that readers came to feel a personal friendship with Rousseau, see Robert Darnton, "Readers Respond to Rousseau: The Fabrication of Romantic Sensitivity," in *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Basic Books, 1984).

<sup>17</sup> Gordon, *Citizens without Sovereignty*, 33.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 4-8, 112, 127.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 116-17.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 143.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 29-33.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 54-57.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 57-61.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 11-24.

<sup>27</sup> Aristotle, *The Politics of Aristotle*, translated by Peter L. Phillips Simpson (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 11.

<sup>28</sup> Gordon, *Citizens without Sovereignty*, 114.

<sup>29</sup> Frédérick Gerson, *L'Amitié au XVIIIe Siècle* (Paris: La Pensée Universelle, 1975), 11-19.

<sup>30</sup> Aristotle, *The Ethics of Aristotle*, translated by J. A. K. Thomson (London: Penguin Books, 1976), 258-59.

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 273-74.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 275-78.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 271-72.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 260-63.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 265.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 266.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 311.

<sup>38</sup> Aymard, "Friends and Neighbors," 453-58; Gerson, *L'Amitié*, 31-38.

<sup>39</sup> Michel de Montaigne, *Selected Essays*, translated by Charles Cotton and edited by William Carew Hazlitt (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, 1996), 6.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 7-8; also see Goodman, *Republic of Letters*, 84 n.88.

<sup>42</sup> Montaigne, *Selected Essays*, 7.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>44</sup> Goodman, *Republic of Letters*, 2.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 304.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 116-17.

<sup>47</sup> Quoted in Ibid., 83.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 27-33.

<sup>49</sup> Quoted in Ibid., 33 n. 59.

<sup>50</sup> Frankel, *Faith of Reason*, 130.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 140.



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<sup>52</sup> Quoted in Goodman, *Republic of Letters*, 183. The first proverb is of course the famous: “Man can not live on bread alone.” Galiani’s proverb can be translated: “As for me, I live on friendship.”

## CHAPTER 2

### RICHARD PRICE: PRIVATE FRIENDSHIP, PUBLIC VIRTUE, AND THE EMPIRE OF PEACE

Richard Price sought to transform political culture to the ideals of friendship. Over the course of his life, Price continually sought to model the modes of behavior in the public sphere after the modes of behavior he knew in his private life of friendship. For Price, friendship was not just a form of sociability, rather it was a way of understanding the world. With its ideals of loyalty, equality, reciprocity, selflessness, humanity, and love of others, friendship permeated every part of human existence. For Price envisioned a sociable empire of friendship that would propagate enlightenment, liberty, virtue, and peace throughout the world. In short, he foresaw friendship spreading an Empire of Peace that would render every thing that humanity had previously understood as obsolete, including every thing from the institutions of monarchy to the very idea of sovereign states. Price, in essence, sought to dissolve the distinction between private and public; he sought to transform the public sphere to the private world of friendship.

Price wanted no clear distinction between the public and private spheres, and this becomes evident by examining his personal character and public persona. Price was of course too modest ever to speak of himself, but he had plenty of admirers who were more than willing to speak well of him. Nearly everyone who met Price admired him for his

candor, sincerity, simplicity of manners, and his friendship. Samuel Rogers, the poet and Price's neighbor as a child who heard many of Price's sermons, noted that "all admired and loved him."<sup>1</sup> As a devout and pious Christian, Price had a deep-rooted love and affection for his fellow human beings and genuinely enjoyed their companionship. Toward the end of his life and in a contemplative and self-reflective mood, Price wrote to his friend William Adams that he had no personal ambition to be remembered by posterity; rather Price hoped that he had simply helped to promote peace, candor, and charity.<sup>2</sup> There is no reason to think that Price was not sincere, and in fact, his kindness was of almost mythical proportions among his friends. It was widely known that Price often spent endless hours playing cards with his wife after she had become seriously ill and bedridden. Card playing was one of the few things that diverted her as she lay on her deathbed, and so Price humored her by playing cards with her, despite the fact that he personally despised such games as foolish and a waste of time. There were also stories of Price helping wounded birds caught in traps and other similar stories.<sup>3</sup> It is, of course, hard to say which are true and which are apocryphal, but the many stories do reflect the myth of Price's private virtue, which in itself reveals the cult of private life that existed.

His sincerity and kindness naturally won Price many friends during his life. Indeed, Price had so many friends and connections that he became one of the most famous men of the eighteenth century.<sup>4</sup> Price had a wide range of correspondents in Britain, on the Continent, and on the other side of the Atlantic in America. Price shared particularly close friendships with the Marquis of Lansdowne, Benjamin Franklin, and Joseph Priestley, but he also developed long-standing correspondences with Thomas

Jefferson, John Adams, and Anne Robert Jacques Turgot—who had a particular affection for Price’s ideas and was most likely the one to introduce Price’s thought to Condorcet and also France generally, where Price gained a wide appreciation—in addition to knowing many lesser-known figures. Price’s journal, which he began keeping toward the end of his life, reveals just what a sacrifice Price made for his friends and correspondents. Though overwhelmed by his correspondence, Price spent most of his days letter-writing, even toward the end of his life when his health began to fail. Price often complained in his journal that his correspondence left no time for his own leisure or studies, but then would castigate himself for even mentioning his own hardship rather than considering his duty to respond to all who took the time to write him. Despite the pleading of his closest friends to curtail his correspondence, Price was too devoted a man of letters to let even a single communication go unanswered.<sup>5</sup> His journal also contains many poignant passages of the inner torment and sense of loss Price felt at the passing of each individual friend’s life. At the beginning of each year, he meticulously recorded the deaths of each of his friends during the previous year and noted their most endearing character traits; and year after year, he offered God his thanks for the opportunity to have shared in so many wonderful friendships.<sup>6</sup> Regardless of the large number of friends that he had, Price felt the same devotion and affection for each one, and his annual journal entries were simply his way of creating a shrine to each friendship that had passed; indeed, it was his way of creating a shrine to friendship.

No moment in Price’s life is more poignant, however, than the death of his wife in 1786. With no children, the couple had a particularly close bond, and Price fell into a

deep depression to the extent that he could not, for the first time in his life, muster the energy to work. Price's circle of friends immediately became concerned for their beloved friend, and offers of solace came in from all over the world. One such offer came from his good friend Lansdowne who offered to take Price into his own home while he grieved the loss of his wife. Lansdowne was apologetic for writing to Price so soon after his tragic loss and thus causing Price to exert himself by reading his letter and responding to it; however, Lansdowne explained—and in doing so, gave perhaps the best definition of friendship as Price understood it—that it is “the duty of every friend you have to incite you to exert yourself.”<sup>7</sup> Price, sincerely appreciative of his friend's kindness and concern, had already arranged for his niece and sister to live with him, which they did for the rest of his life.<sup>8</sup>

Price agreed with Lansdowne that incitement to exertion was a central duty of friendship, which William Morgan's 1815 biography of Price makes clear. Morgan was Price's nephew and very close to his uncle, under whom he worked for several years as an actuarial apprentice, and so his biography is an important source of information on Price. Morgan used his own memories along with those of his family and his family's papers, including Price's personal papers. Inspired by Franklin's autobiography and toward the end of his life, Price had put together some notes and papers in preparation for an account of his own life. Morgan also substantially shared his uncle's worldview. Morgan too was a radical dissenter and a supporter of the French Revolution; indeed, he actually went to France to witness the Revolution unfold, and his accounts from France became an important source of information for Price. So there is reason to think that his

biography is faithful to Price's intentions for an autobiography. In one telling passage, Morgan discussed, with his uncle in mind, the difference between "the exploits of heroes and conquerors" and those of the "philosopher of the divine . . . the latter, though destitute of the splendor which dazzles and deceives the multitude, have a tendency to dignify and exalt the human character, and to excite us to glory,—not by indulging the destructive ambition of triumphing over our fellow-creatures, but by exerting far nobler efforts to control our passions and to triumph over ourselves."<sup>9</sup> This passage not only demonstrates the idea of exertion but also the idea of sociability as a practical force for the improvement of humanity. Heroes and conquerors live above others, while philosophers and divines incite people to improve themselves and others. Friendship then, as a part of sociability, was a force for the exertion of humans to enlightenment. As Price explained to Lansdowne, there is a "connexion between the progress of knowledge and the increase of Piety and peace and goodwill among men."<sup>10</sup> Thus, enlightenment, truth, peace, and friendship are intertwined. For Price, to achieve one, all must be sought, or rather exerted from others.

Friendship was more than just an intimate, personal relationship for Price; it was also a social relationship within a larger community. This social relationship was manifested in many ways in Price's membership in the Club of Honest Whigs in which he was one of the most prominent members. The club met every other Thursday for supper as well as discussion of science, politics, and literature. The Club of Honest Whigs grew out of John Canton's circle of friends and became prominent in the 1760s, when Price became a member. Canton was a prominent scientist of his time, and as a

free thinker in religious matters, he tended to attract many dissenting ministers to his group. The club consisted of about twenty-five members, most of whom were dissenting clergymen from the London metropolitan area. Price and Joseph Priestley were two of the leading members of the club, although Benjamin Franklin often took center stage as the most internationally famous member.<sup>11</sup> The exact circumstances of Price's introduction to the club are unknown, but more than likely he was simply introduced to the club by one of his fellow dissenting ministers. Regardless of his introduction, Price immediately became a leading member, and in fact, John Canton was sufficiently impressed with Price that he submitted one of Price's papers on the mathematical theory of probability to the Royal Society. The society received the paper well and eventually offered Price membership, beginning Price's career and reputation as a scientist and mathematician.<sup>12</sup>

The Club of Honest Whigs served as an important method of introduction for talented young people into the society of men of letters, but as Verner W. Crane states, the club was more than anything else "devoted to conviviality and intellectual conversation" and "their talk mirrored another aspect of contemporary culture: the interest in science."<sup>13</sup> Thus Crane refers to the club as "Friends of Science and Liberty," and he emphasizes the way in which the fellowship and association of the club affected and propagated science and libertarian politics in the second half of the eighteenth century. The club, however, not only mirrored the contemporary culture with its interest in science, but also mirrored the contemporary culture of friendship among men of letters. The club, with its culture of friendship, was an institution of reciprocity, equality,

and devotion to others, but perhaps more importantly, it was a private institution that propagated friendship across all time, spatial, and territorial limits. Franklin wrote, after returning to America, that although he could not be there in person “I think of you and am present with you *in Spirit*; and shall take it kindly, if when you are not crowded, you would order a Chair for me, and only caution one another not to tread upon my toes.”<sup>14</sup> And indeed, Franklin was always present in the minds of the members of the club. With its culture of friendship as both friends of science and friends of liberty, the Club of Honest Whigs was “disposed to challenge undue or usurped authority wherever it raised its head. For Richard Price in particular, the ideal of freedom . . . was the essence of moral philosophy.”<sup>15</sup>

The club was thus morally committed to the ideal of freedom—which is also the cornerstone of friendship. But for Price, the relationship between morality and liberty was much more complicated. Price’s first and most impressive single work was his *Review of the Principle Questions in Morals*, which is still widely studied today by ethicists as a formative work in contemporary deontological thought. In his *Review*, Price adumbrated a duty-based morality. He argued that there is an absolute right and wrong action for every moral decision, and it is the duty of every individual to perform the right action once that right action is determined. Price understood, however, that individuals often fail to understand the right action, and so, people often perform immoral actions out of misunderstanding. Regardless, morality was not optional, rather it was an absolute duty.<sup>16</sup>



A problem arises, however, in reconciling Price's duty-based morality with his radical libertarian politics. The two are ostensibly incongruent and paradoxical—the one being based on mandatory duty and the other on liberty—but as Susan Rae Peterson argues, Price's ethics and politics are actually complementary. In fact, it is not coincidental that Price's first and most long-lasting work was a work of ethics and morals, because that was the ultimate end of existence—to live a moral life. Price's politics were simply a means to that end: political liberty was a prerequisite for morality. Moral action required free agency, because morality is truly moral only when it is a free and conscious decision. Right action can be coerced, but that action then loses its moral character; in short, morality cannot be coerced. Thus, any governmental coercion to action takes away from the moral agency of the actor, so political liberty is absolutely essential to morality, which is the ultimate end of life.<sup>17</sup>

Price wove a complex web that thoroughly interconnected private moral agency with public political liberty. Friendship was simply a manifestation of that web. It encompassed both his duty-based ethics and his liberty-based politics: friendship is a freely formed society, yet upon formation, it immediately has its own set of duties. In attempting to reconcile his ethics and politics, Peterson argues that "Price uses a powerful analogy: just as individuals need free will to be moral agents, so they need political liberty to be good citizens, as well as moral agents."<sup>18</sup> Friendship then is the ultimate moral society because it is always formed freely and it always has its own set of duties. So I argue that Price drew an even more powerful analogy between his philosophy and

friendship—that is, friendship parallels his moral and political philosophy. Price may very well have not been conscious of this analogy, but he most certainly did live it.

With his proto-deontological ethics of absolute right and wrong dictated by reason, Price was very much a contrarian in rejecting the utilitarian and sentimental ethics of many of his peers, most notably David Hume and Priestley. And Price did involve himself in literary quarrels, yet he always behaved in a friendly, civil, and polite manner. In one quarrel early in his philosophical career, Price attacked Hume's skeptical ideas and his repudiation of miracles. Price referred to Hume's skepticism as "founded on indisputable fallacies and is indeed nothing but a poor though specious sophism."<sup>19</sup> After the printing of these comments, Price realized that they were too harsh and personal. Price understood that he simply had a different opinion from Hume and that Hume meant no malice, so Price sent a copy of his manuscript to Hume with a letter of apology for the overly censorious comments directed at him, or rather his ideas. Hume's response to the apology reveals much about Price and how he understood the relationship between ideas and sociability. Hume wrote:

So far from there being any Occasion to make me an Apology for your late Publications that you have prevented me in my Intentions of writing to you, and of returning you thanks for the Civility with which you have treated me. I had almost said unusual Civility. For to the Reproach of Learning, it is but too rare to find a literary Controversy conducted with proper Decency and Good manners, especially where it turns upon religious Subjects, in which men often think themselves at Liberty to give way to their utmost Rancour and Animosity. But you like a true Philosopher, while you overwhelm me with the Weight of your Arguments, give me Encouragement by the Mildness of your Expressions: and instead of *Rogue*, *Rascal* and *Blockhead*, the illiberal language of the Bishop of Gloucester and his school, you address me, as a man mistaken, but capable of Reason and conviction.<sup>20</sup>

Price immediately responded to Hume that he was glad not to have personally offended him. He continued: “I am not, I hope inclin’d to dislike any person merely for a difference in opinion however great, or to connect worth of character and God’s favour with any particular set of sentiments. It is one of my most fix’d and favourite principles which I endeavor often to inculcate, that nothing is fundamental besides a faithful desire to find out and to practice truth and right.”<sup>21</sup>

Price’s quarrel with his close friend Joseph Priestley also reveals his belief that friendship and polite sociability should not be sacrificed for the furthering of theology, or any particular philosophical or political beliefs. In 1777, Priestley published *Disquisitions Relating to Matter and Spirit* and *The Doctrine of Philosophical Necessity Illustrated*. In his *Disquisitions*, Priestley argued for materialism—that is, that the body and mind were necessarily linked and the one could not exist without the other. So that with the death of the body, the spirit was also in a state of nonexistence, and the spirit did not rise again until the rise of the body with the return of Christ—matter and spirit were thus necessarily linked.<sup>22</sup> And in his *Doctrine of Philosophical Necessity*, Priestley argued that there was “a plan of *universal providence*” in which God had determined “all events.” Men did make their own choices but those choices were already determined by God.<sup>23</sup>

Price was, of course, a dualist and libertarian, and so he disagreed with Priestley in almost every aspect of his materialism and determinism. Price thought that the mind and body were two distinct entities, so that with the passing of the body the spirit persisted. Price also believed that all people were free and voluntary agents. He

acknowledged that God may in fact foresee all events but that individuals ultimately make their own decisions. If people were not voluntary agents then they could not be accountable to God and thus not moral agents.<sup>24</sup>

The two friends exchanged numerous philosophical letters in 1778 in which each man argued the merits of his case, and by the end of the year, they both agreed that they had argued their cases to the utmost. Though the two men still disagreed, they conducted the argument in a friendly manner, and Priestley, with Price's approval, decided to publish their epistolary exchange as an example of friendly dispute under the title *A Free Discussion of the Doctrines of Materialism and Philosophical Necessity*. As Priestley made clear in his dedication, they published their *Free Discussion* as an example of a free and amicable discourse. They meant it to be a model of behavior—an example of a personal relationship taking precedence over ideology; and more specifically, it was meant to be a model of friendship for the public to emulate. They did ask the public to consider the differing ideas. But as Priestley tells John Lee, in his dedication to him, he presented the work “not in the character of an *advocate*, but in that of a *friend*,” Priestley presented the work not as an advocate of his own ideas, but to show the merits of his character as a friend. He continued, no matter which “way any of our friends incline,” regarding the argument, “we are confident we shall not lose their esteem, so, we can assure them, they will not lose ours.” Finally, Priestley claimed, the ultimate purpose of the *Free Discussion* is “to perpetuate, as far as may be in my power, the memory of such friendships.”<sup>25</sup> For Price and Priestley, friendship was more important than ideas, or at the very least, ideas should not infringe upon friendship. As Price wrote to Priestley: “It

will afford a proof that two persons may differ totally on points the most important and sacred, with a perfect esteem for one another; and it may likewise give a specimen of a proper manner” of ideological discourse. For “there is nothing that offends me more than that acrimony of spirit with which controversies . . . are commonly conducted.”<sup>26</sup>

Just as Price did not let ideas get in the way of personal friendship neither did he allow national boundaries to limit his sphere of friendship. The Club of Honest Whigs, for example, though spatially limited to biweekly supper meetings, was in essence a club of international outlook—or more appropriately, a club that refused to see nations as a legitimate form of human association. Driven by the ideal of friendship and its politics informed by its institutions of friendship, the club gave no consideration to national boundaries. Thus the club, with its lack of any nationalistic loyalty and its personal loyalty to Franklin, became an instrument for radical, antigovernment agitation during the American Revolution. Indeed the American Revolution became the primary topic of discussion for years within the club. Referring to the topic of discussion of one dinner, a member of the club stated: “We began and ended with the Americans.”<sup>27</sup> The club was also important for testing out new ideas for political pamphlets. Price used the biweekly meetings to present what would become the ideological foundations of his *Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty*, a pamphlet that openly criticized the British government’s treatment of the colonies and supported the American cause. Many members of the Club of Honest Whigs were also members of the London Revolution Society, which would become infamous during the French Revolution for calling for a union of the people of France and Britain. Edmund Burke later criticized Price, a member of both the

Revolution Society and a member of the Club of Honest Whigs, as “a man much connected with literary caballers and intriguing philosophers.”<sup>28</sup>

Before the American Revolution, Price had been primarily a literary and philosophical figure, but the war brought Price into the spotlight of international politics. For Price, however, it was not the allure of power that brought him to politics but the inveterate sense of disdain for the manner in which the British government treated his American friends. In support of his friends’ cause, he published his pamphlet *Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty, the Principles of Government, and the Justice and Policy of the War with America*, which was his first and most important political writing. Written in 1776 and primarily for distribution in the American colonies, it sold over 60,000 copies, which made it the second most widely circulated pamphlet of the American Revolution after Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense*. The very printing and structure of the *Observations* exemplify Price’s life and thought. For example, for the pamphlet to reach a larger public, Price allowed publishers to print a cheaper version than was normal for a first printing, and which drastically reduced Price’s own earnings.<sup>29</sup> Thus, Price sacrificed his private benefit for the public good. And in 1785, Price would publish and print, at his own expense, his *Observations on the Importance of the American Revolution*, a pamphlet meant to advise the Americans on matters of government.<sup>30</sup>

Price’s *Observations* is both a political treatise and a personal plea to all Americans. Price wrote the *Observations* in common and bellicose language; common so that it could be understood by a wide public, and bellicose so that it would incite that

public to action. Price's writing in the pamphlet took on a personal and indignant tone at the government's behavior. Price felt the sympathetic pain for a close friend who has suffered some great humiliation. Price rose against the government in print just as his humiliated American friends rose against the government in rebellion. In an indignant tone, Price claimed that the ministers of Britain view the Americans not as free, moral beings, but rather they see "the people of New-England as nothing but a mob."<sup>31</sup> He then encouraged them "to run many hazards, and even not to repine at the greatest expence of blood and treasure."<sup>32</sup> The bellicosity of the pamphlet caused many Britons, including Edmund Burke, to accuse Price of trying to subvert all civil authority. He claimed not to subvert "all" civil authority, only unjust civil authority—presumably British authority. For just civil authority is founded on a social contract in which government is a trust from the people.<sup>33</sup> Though Price could not be with his friends in person, he would be with them in print.

Price began his *Observations* by affirming his lack of connection with any party, rather he pleaded for the universal ideals of liberty and justice. For Price, the ideal of liberty was self-direction—that is, the ability for society to govern itself. In every free state, man is his "own legislator,"<sup>34</sup> which he later clarified as meaning that each individual has a share in government.<sup>35</sup> In a large empire like Britain, active participation was simply impractical, so Price argued that representation should be used to allow people participation in government. Price thought that giving citizens public participation "would exclude the desolations of war, and produce universal peace and order."<sup>36</sup> Participation and free government exalts the nature of man. "Every member of

a free state, having his property secure and knowing himself his own governor, possesses a consciousness of dignity in himself and feels incitements to emulation and improvement.”<sup>37</sup> For Price, it was better to risk some civil unrest for the sake of liberty than to crush the people’s vigor with a tyrannical government. For free government “gives room for that elevation of spirit and that exertion of the human powers which is necessary to human improvement.”<sup>38</sup>

With America and its relationship to Britain in mind, Price then went on to discuss states having authority over other states. He reasoned that no state could have authority over another unless that state were properly represented in the parent state’s legislature. For Price, lack of representation caused problems because “between one state and another there is none of that fellow-feeling that takes place between persons in private life.”<sup>39</sup> The goal was not a union of states but a union of private individuals. Freedom and liberty give dignity to men and encourage emulation of their fellows. The private lives of citizens—that is, the private sphere—will unite states to the “universal peace” that Price envisioned. But Britain’s greatest error lay in its attitude toward the colonies. Price argued that if Britain had only been a friend to the colonies rather than a governor that the political relationship between the two states would have been more favorable. He declared:

Had we nourished and favoured America with a view to commerce instead of considering it as a country to be governed, had we, like a liberal and wise people, rejoiced to see a multitude of free states branched forth from ourselves, all enjoying independent legislatures similar to our own, had we aimed at binding them to us only by ties of affection and interest, and contented ourselves with a moderate power rendered durable by being lenient and friendly . . . had this, I say, been our policy and temper, there is nothing so great or happy that we might not have expected.<sup>40</sup>



Thus, public policy must be led by a temper of private friendship and affection, and the modes of behavior of private life must dictate the behavior of states and be the determining factor of judgment of public policy.

Just as Price criticized Britain's policy and temper toward the colonies, he also criticized the division of Europe into separate states, because their conflicting interests simply cause war and carnage. To solve this problem, he asked that "a general confederacy be formed by the appointment of a senate consisting of representatives from all different states." This senate would manage the common concerns of the states; and using its common force, it would arbitrate disputes between the states. Thus,

Each separate state would be secure against the interference of sovereign power in its private concerns, and, therefore, would possess liberty, and at the same time it would be secure against all oppression and insult from every neighboring state. Thus might the scattered force and abilities of a whole continent be gathered into one point, all litigation settled as they rose, universal peace preserved, and nation prevented *from any more lifting up a sword against nation*.<sup>41</sup>

The model of Price's ideal British Empire as a union of friends was also to be the model of Europe and the world.

Price's two pamphlets show an open contemplation and full understanding of the implications of private life for the public sphere, particularly in the analogy he draws between the private lives of individuals and the international relationship between states. This new analogy of the state as friend formed the center of Price's Empire of Peace. His new empire was necessarily based upon private sociability and the ideals of friendship. During the American Revolutionary period Price gained an even more acute appreciation of society; indeed he came to believe that society was absolutely necessary for human

happiness and improvement. As he wrote in his published *Fast Sermon* of 1781: individuals “necessarily seek society and cannot exist happily out of it. . . . An existence absolutely solitary must, one would think, be dreary and melancholy.”<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, private associations were necessary “to promote discussion and to diffuse light through a state.”<sup>43</sup> The free association of individuals in private life will instill greater dignity in men, and these private friendships will further inspire men to enlightenment. Finally, private sociability leads to universal enlightenment and virtue, which necessarily leads to peace.

Sociability and friendship were absolutely necessary for the attainment of liberty, virtue, and ultimately universal peace. The individual, Price claimed, had such a “love of domination, selfishness, and depravity, that none of them can be raised to an elevation above others without utmost danger.”<sup>44</sup> In the charged political atmosphere of 1777, supporters of the government rightfully construed this and other statements as an attack on the British monarchy, but it was also an attack on monarchy everywhere. For Price, unsociable individuals were always corrupt; society and sociability, particularly friendship, made men good. Typically unsociable people, monarchs are inherently solitary individuals at the top of a hierarchical structure, and furthermore, one individual with more political power than the others upsets the will of the state. Finally, monarchs are incapable of a sociability that is predicated upon equality, and anyone who can not have an equal can certainly not be a friend.

The Stadholder Crisis in Holland and the Regency Crisis reinforced Price’s opinions on the rulers of Britain and the government of Britain, which he did not consider

to be a participatory, free government. In 1786, Holland was in political chaos, with a civil war looming on the horizon. Fundamentally opposed to the principles and practices of monarchy, the “Patriotic Party” began opposing William V of Orange. In a larger sense, the controversy was between democracy and aristocracy. With the Netherlands an important part of European finances, the countries of western Europe quickly became involved.<sup>45</sup> France, which by this time had made moves toward liberalism, supported the Patriotic Party, while Prussia and Britain supported William V. Europe seemed on the verge of yet another war. With Britain preparing for war in 1787, Price, like many of the radicals, saw the crisis as yet another concoction by Britain’s ruling class for its own political and financial gain at the expense of the naturally sociable and peaceable people of Europe.<sup>46</sup> The British efforts to crush the Patriotic Party disgusted Price. It was unscrupulous and abominable that Britain, out of the self-interest of its leaders, should destroy all hopes for another people’s liberty.<sup>47</sup> Price thought all wars were produced by “the aspirations of kings and the intrigues of *courts*” simply to delight the rich.<sup>48</sup> Kings and aristocracy cause wars, not sociable people. Sociable people are good, peaceable, and, above all, friends.

The Regency Crisis of 1787 further radicalized Price’s antimonarchialism; it also gives some intimation of Price’s future reaction to the French Revolution, which was only two years away. Upon the onset of George III’s illness in 1787 and unsure of whether or not the king would regain his sanity, Britons began to debate the merits of making the Prince of Wales a perpetual regent—that is, to give him the powers of king without the official coronation until after George III’s death. Realizing that the king’s

recovery could mean civil war if the Regent were unwilling to relinquish power, Price supported the establishment of the Prince of Wales as a perpetual Regent. Rather than securing the British monarchy, he hoped that the establishment of a permanent regency would “contribute to destroy the notions of the independent and indefeasible right of Kings to govern,” because it would finally show the people’s right to choose their leader, rather than have governors determined by hereditary birth.<sup>49</sup> Price had finally concluded that rulers were not responsible to a sociable people and did not institute the will of the state, so they had to be deposed. Civil society could no longer endure kings, and it must risk civil order for the sake of civil liberty. 1787 was a radicalizing year for Price; the Stadholder Crisis and the Regency Crisis crystallized Price’s ideas about the relationship between the corruption of monarchy, which is inherently unsociable, and the continuance of international war. Even throughout the American Revolution, Price’s most severe rhetoric had not called for the abolishment of monarchy; but by the end of 1787, Price moved away from the idea of a balanced government led by a monarch in favor of a more democratic and sociable society of friends.

By the outbreak of the French Revolution, Price had become bitterly disappointed and thoroughly disillusioned with Great Britain’s prospects for internal reform. In 1785, Price wrote a pamphlet advising the Americans on government, with their constitutional problems in mind, significantly titled *Observations of the Importance of the American Revolution and the Means of Making it a Benefit to the World*. He had hoped that the American Revolution would open a new prospect in human affairs and begin “a new aera in the history of mankind, a revolution by which Britons themselves will be the greatest

gainers, if wise enough to improve properly the check that has been given to the despotism of their ministers, and to catch the flame of virtuous liberty which has saved their American brethren.”<sup>50</sup> Despite Price’s optimism, liberty did not spread to Britain. By July of 1789, it had become clear that Dissenters’ attempts at a Parliamentary repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts had failed, and Parliament still had not expanded representation. Failing to win expanded political participation, Dissenters, Price included, became even more radical.<sup>51</sup> And Price, in particular, had become thoroughly disaffected with the rulers of Britain. They had, Price thought, unnecessarily put Britons through a costly war with America; they nearly brought on a war with France over the Stadholder Crisis in Holland; and by 1789, Britain seemed again to be on the verge of war, this time with Spain over Nootka Sound, a trading post on Vancouver Island, which both countries claimed. Price no longer trusted Britain’s ruling elite, which he considered the source of the failure of reform. The governing orders constituted a minority that ruled without the consent of the people. So Price and other radicals began to question the efficacy of seeking enlightened reforms from corrupt institutions and leaders that represented privilege and narrow nationalism,<sup>52</sup> not his ideals of sociability, equality, friendship, and internationalism.

Albert Goodwin argues that the friends of liberty, disillusioned by the failure of reform, sought parliamentary reform by extra-parliamentary pressure, such as political societies that promoted democratic movements in other countries.<sup>53</sup> Although Goodwin considers the political aspects of the friends of liberty; he does not consider the element of private sociability. For instance, when discussing the meaning of the phrase “friends

of liberty,” he defines “liberty” as participatory government, but he does not explore the meaning of “friends.” Using Lansdowne’s definition of a friend, which Price certainly agreed with, the phrase “friend of liberty” would mean “those who incite the exertion of liberty.” As I have shown, Price thought that friendship was the key to the exertion of men to enlightenment and liberty. Finally, Price thought that friendship would bring liberty, and that by uniting people worldwide in friendship, enlightenment would spread throughout the world bringing liberty, and thus the possibility of public virtue and peace.

With his health steadily declining and his hopes for reform almost dashed, Price decided to withdraw from public life and focus on his congregational duties. Price determined to live out the rest of his years as calmly and peacefully as possible, but the French Revolution animated and reinvigorated his spirits.<sup>54</sup> He hoped that the spirit of the French Revolution would become a contagion, as he put it, and spread throughout the world,<sup>55</sup> and he longed for it to commence finally a general reformation of Europe.<sup>56</sup>

Newly invigorated, Price agreed to give an address to the Revolution Society of London on 4 November 1789. The Revolution Society met annually on 4 November—the birthday of William III—to celebrate the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Price turned down an offer to present the address the previous year because of his weak health; but in 1789, his spirits lifted by the French Revolution, he agreed to the address.<sup>57</sup> That address was later printed as a pamphlet titled *A Discourse on the Love of our Country*. In the *Discourse*, Price vehemently attacked the monarchy and much of the British government. It was so inflammatory that it provoked Edmund Burke to attack Price personally in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, which began the debate over the revolution’s

meaning for Britain. Even from the earliest days of his career, Price had always opposed personal attacks as fundamentally uncivil and unfriendly; yet, or perhaps because of it, Price never responded to Burke, although many of his friends did, including Mary Wollstonecraft.

In the *Discourse*, Price fully and inextricably linked the state, citizenship, and friendship into his socio-political theory. With the *Discourse*, Price hoped to explain the duty that everyone owes to their country, but he first explained that “our country” is “not the soil...on which we happen to have been born...but that community of which we are members, or that body of companions and friends and kindred who are associated with us under the same constitution of government, protected by the same laws, and bound together by the same civil polity.” He went on to say that duty to country should not give any conviction of superiority to other countries, and love of country should not foster rivalry among nations. Rather, “*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*” Moreover, we should “consider ourselves as citizens of the world, and take care to maintain a just regard to the rights of other countries,” and “our first concern as lovers of our country must be to enlighten it.”<sup>58</sup>

So Price began his address by expanding the definition of “country.” Not limited to political boundaries, country comprises “companions and friends” who choose to contract themselves into a society. And as friends, people have a duty to incite exertion and enlightenment from their fellow citizens. But with the expanded definition, country is now all sociable companions and friends; and as such, people must consider themselves “citizens of the world.” Finally, citizens have a duty to all the people of the

world. Significantly, while Price did at times refer to events in Britain, he never referred to Britain by name in the *Discourse*, which implies that he no longer considered reform movements in Britain alone sufficient to effect reform or for that matter even recognize the legitimacy of the British government.

Price then went on to attack monarchy by arguing that the king is merely the first servant of the people, and that his majesty is simply the majesty of the people. He argued that there are two enemies that the country should be aware of: those internal, intimating the king, and those external. Internal dangers, he argued, are more likely to cause wars than external dangers. Price added that he longs for a time “when the nations of earth, happy under just governments, and no longer in danger from the passions of kings, will find out better ways of settling their disputes.”<sup>59</sup>

Price continued by attacking unthinking nationalistic chauvinism. The Glorious Revolution of 1688 was indeed a great event and should be celebrated, but it was not complete. It did not secure religious freedom, and representation was still not fair or just. Price urged his country to improve upon the Revolution, rather than wallow in complacency. He argued that too many people celebrate the virtue of their country but live an indecent life.<sup>60</sup> To be a good citizen one must be moral. He could not reconcile himself “to the idea of an immoral patriot, or that separation of private from public virtue, which some think to be possible.”<sup>61</sup> The private and public spheres had to be connected for virtue and peace to reign. At the time of this address, Price was at the end of his life, but he had fully and inexorably linked private friendship and public virtue.



But, it was Price's peroration that caught people's attention, notably Burke's.

Price concluded with a bellicose flurry of oratory. He stated that he was glad to have lived long enough to see

Nations panting for liberty, which seemed to have lost the idea of it. I have lived to see thirty millions of people, indignant and resolute, spurning at slavery, and demanding liberty with an irresistible voice, their king led in triumph, and an arbitrary monarch surrendering himself to his subjects . . . all ye friends of freedom . . . behold, the light you have struck out, after setting America free, reflected to France and there kindled into a blaze that lays despotism in ashes and warms and illuminates Europe! Tremble all ye oppressors of the world!<sup>62</sup>

Thus, Price fully explicated his political and social philosophies that he hoped would enlighten and liberate the people of the world.

With his philosophy of private friendship and public virtue fully explicated, Price spent the last sixteen months of his life working feverishly, despite his failing health, to achieve it. Price was not an abstract philosopher who despised action; rather, as his life and thought shows, he was a man of action, and action was necessary to spread enlightenment from France to the rest of Europe, particularly Great Britain, which could no longer claim to be the vanguard of liberty. Price began to foster friendships between the people of France and Great Britain, which included his entertaining of French revolutionaries at his home.<sup>63</sup> Hoping that the liberty would quickly spread throughout the world, the Revolution Society took on a new role, from celebrating Britain's revolution to fostering private friendship and union between the friends of liberty in France and Britain. As an active, and even leading, member of the society, Price had a direct influence on it, and thus, the activities of the society reveal a great deal about him.

In fact, Price's name appeared first on a list of its members chosen to be on the governing board in 1788.<sup>64</sup>

Under attack from critics in Britain, especially Edmund Burke, the Revolution Society published its correspondence in 1792 to show that they were not conspirators against Britain but friends of justice, truth, and freedom. They attacked Burke as “a citizen of a particular State.” And, they hoped that their correspondence with other friends of liberty would lead to peace and the dulling of national hatred, the embers of which Burke had stoked.<sup>65</sup> By publishing its correspondence, the society hoped to show the public its true intention and purpose, which it put forth at its 1789 meeting. At its meeting on 4 November 1789, the society declared that it was based upon three propositions: that all civil and political authority is derived from the people; that abuse of power justifies resistance; and that the right of private judgment, liberty of conscience, trial by jury, freedom of press, and freedom of elections are sacred and inviolable. These propositions all assume that sociable people, given the necessary freedoms to enhance sociability, are capable of self-government. The society also went on to call for the spread of similar societies to improve freedom.<sup>66</sup> By opening more clubs and expanding its correspondence, the Revolution Society hoped to spread friendship, goodwill, and the encouragement of enlightenment.

It was also at that meeting that Price addressed the group and gave his *Discourse*. That night, the society met at the London Tavern for dinner, and Price offered, along with many other toasts by the members, a congratulatory address to the National Assembly of France. He said that “disdaining National partialities” the society offered “the National

Assembly of France their Congratulations.” He further hoped that the French Revolution would “encourage other Nations to assert the *unalienable* rights of Mankind.”<sup>67</sup> Jacobin clubs all over France, along with many clubs throughout Britain, sent letters thanking the Revolution Society for its congratulations.

One such letter from the Archbishop of Aix, the president of the National Assembly at the time, expressed that Price’s sentiments “ought to unite together, in all Countries of the World, the true friends of Liberty.”<sup>68</sup> This call for a union scared many in Britain. In a later letter, with Price’s influence evident, the Archbishop of Aix wrote to the society to say that “We must not allow the prejudices which disgrace Nations to produce Wars, those *errors* of governments. But the two most enlightened People of Europe ought to show, by their example, that the love of their country is perfectly compatible with every sentiment of humanity.”<sup>69</sup> Nearly echoing Price’s *Discourse*, the Archbishop of Aix blamed rulers for wars and spoke of the virtues of the people that come with the proper “love of their country.”

The members of the Revolution Society, reflecting Price’s ideas, sincerely believed that they were fostering a friendship with the people of France, and as such, they were promoting peace and enlightenment. The society wrote to the National Assembly in agreement that “all Free People are brethren” and that “between Great Britain and France perpetual peace and friendship may be established to the remotest ages.”<sup>70</sup> The society also hoped the different liberal societies would be temporary; it hoped for “a sacred Union” between the countries “in support of *universal* FREEDOM. In the mean time let this Union be established among the Friends of Liberty, wherever they may be found.”<sup>71</sup>

Thus, friendship would secure an eternal and perpetual peace that was capable of stretching across all spatial boundaries.

Their message was clear: the societies of the friends of liberty, the Revolution Society included, were simply preparatory for a greater union of enlightened people around the world that would finally destroy despotism and war. Nothing exemplified this better than Price's speech at the Crown and Anchor tavern on 14 July 1790, where a group had met to celebrate the first anniversary of the French Revolution. Price called for an alliance between France and Britain, which was necessary for peace because "THEY are now become an example to US." He continued: "Thus united, the two kingdoms will be omnipotent, they will soon draw into their confederation HOLLAND, and other countries on this side the Globe, and the United States of AMERICA on the other; and, when alarms of war come, they will be able to say to contending nations, PEACE, and there will be PEACE."<sup>72</sup> Thus, the free and enlightened friends of liberty will unite and secure peace through a confederation much as he had outlined in his *Observations and Additional Observations*. An empire of peace led by enlightened people and fueled by friendship would spread throughout the world, rather than an empire of war and destruction led by tyrants and despots.

Price believed that his empire was close at hand, and he worked until his last day to effect it. Price's last public address came on 4 November 1790 at the annual meeting of the Revolution Society. As the chair of the Revolution Society for that meeting, he thanked the Society of Nantes for giving the society a banner with the words "universal peace" depicted next to "the Flags of England and France, bound together with a Ribbon,

on which was this Motto ‘*A l’Union de la France et d’Angleterre.*’” He went on to call for a further expansion of “Union of the Friends of public Liberty.”<sup>73</sup>

Shortly after giving the 4 November 1790 address, Price’s health quickly declined, and he died on 19 April 1791. Friends of liberty around the world went into mourning upon Price’s death. Not only had he been an ally in their struggle but also a close friend. By the time he died, Price had become a symbol of friendship, character, benevolence, and virtue. The Revolution Society received letters of condolences from all over France expressing people’s grief and loss, to all of which the society responded with grateful thanks. One response, to the *Société des Amis de la Constitution*, poignantly summarized Price, his thought, and what he had come to symbolize. It is perhaps the best eulogy of Price and deserves to be quoted at length:

YOUR Condolence on the loss of that excellent Man, DOCTOR PRICE, who was really an ornament to our Country, and to human nature, is not only a proof of the esteem in which *our* Nation is held by *You*, but that *you* possess in the highest degree those genuine sentiments of public Virtue and universal Benevolence, which you applaud so much in our departed fellow Citizen; who, actuated by the liberal motives of true patriotism, scorned to flatter the vices and follies of the *pretended* friends of his Country; and as there are ever aiming at injustice, he well knew that their conduct must ultimately tend to National shame, and to the misery of Millions. He fought the establishment of her Honour and Prosperity, not in degradation of human nature by the enslavement of his fellow creatures, but by the exertion of those generous principles of Liberty, which exalt and dignify the social state.<sup>74</sup>

There was a tension that Enlightenment thinkers faced, as Dena Goodman observes, between “maintaining citizenship in the political and geographical states that define their nationality without compromising their primary allegiance to the values” of the Republic of Letters.<sup>75</sup> The progression of Price’s life and thought is a manifestation of this tension. He moved from being a loyal British reformer of the existing political

institutions in the early years of the American Revolution, to the early years of the French Revolution when he believed that the political institutions had become an impediment to enlightenment, progress, and peace. By the end of his life, Price saw governments and national boundaries as restraints that kept the peoples of the world from natural sociability and friendship—the two things he thought led to enlightenment, progress, and peace. This is particularly clear in his *Discourse* in which he redefined country as a “body of companions and friends.” For Price, friendship was a revolutionary institution of convergence between the public and private spheres. The American Revolution brought on this revolution in Price’s thought, as he began to challenge the old ideas that states were somehow immune from moral judgment as political entities. Rather Price argued that states should be judged as a friend would be judged in private life. By drawing an analogy between the state and the friend, Price argued for the moral responsibility of states as moral agents, but he also put all human action under the scrutiny of friendship and its ideals of freedom, reciprocity, equality, and humanity. Price was indeed a “friend of liberty” with his loyalty squarely placed in his own Republic of Friends, which he hoped would spread across the globe as an Empire of Peace.

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Caroline E. Williams, *A Welsh Family from the Beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century* (London: Women's Printing Society Limited, 1893), 58.

<sup>2</sup> Price to William Adams, 16 Dec 1788, in Richard Price, *The Correspondence of Richard Price*, edited by W. Bernard Peach and D. O. Thomas, 3 vols. (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1983), 3:190.

<sup>3</sup> Williams, *A Welsh Family*, 29-35.

<sup>4</sup> Carl B. Cone, *Torchbearer of Freedom: The Influence of Richard Price in Eighteenth Century Thought* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1952), 3.

<sup>5</sup> Richard Price, "Richard Price's Journal for the Period 25 March 1787 to 6 February 1791," edited by D. O. Thomas, *The National Library of Wales Journal* 21 (1980): 393.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 383, 389, 392, 396.

<sup>7</sup> Lansdowne to Price, 29 September 1786, 3:63.

<sup>8</sup> Price, "Journal," 382.

<sup>9</sup> William Morgan, *Memoirs of the Life of the Rev. Richard Price, D.D. F.R.S.* (London: Printed for R. Hunter, 1815), 2-3.

<sup>10</sup> Price to Lansdowne, 25 November 1786, 3:91.

<sup>11</sup> Verner W. Crane, "The Club of Honest Whigs: Friends of Science and Liberty" *William and Mary Quarterly* 23 (1943): 210-33.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 224-25.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 210.

<sup>14</sup> Quoted in *Ibid.*, 213.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 227.

<sup>16</sup> Susan Rae Peterson, "The Compatibility of Richard Price's Politics and Ethics," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 45 (1984): 538-40.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 540-47.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 544.

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<sup>19</sup> Price, *Correspondence*, 3:45 n. 2.

<sup>20</sup> David Hume to Price, 18 March 1767, 1:45-46.

<sup>21</sup> Price to Hume, 24 March 1767, 1:46-47.

<sup>22</sup> Richard Price and Joseph Priestley, *A Free Discussion of the Doctrines of Materialism and Philosophical Necessity* (1778; reprint, New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1978), xvi-xx.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, xxii-xxiii.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, xxiii-xxv.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, dedication by Priestley to John Lee.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, xxxvii-xxxviii.

<sup>27</sup> Quoted in Crane, "Club of Honest Whigs," 222.

<sup>28</sup> Quoted in *Ibid.*, 230-31.

<sup>29</sup> Roland Thomas, *Richard Price: Philosopher and Apostle of Liberty* (London: Oxford University Press, 1924), 74.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 97.

<sup>31</sup> Richard Price, *Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty*, in *Political Writings*, edited by D. O. Thomas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 54 (hereafter cited as *O.N.C.L.*).

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 14-16.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 20-24.

<sup>35</sup> Richard Price, *Additional Observations*, in *Political Writings*, 80 (hereafter cited as *A.O.*).



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<sup>36</sup> *O.N.C.L.*, 24-27; for Price's thoughts on representation and participatory government, also see D. O. Thomas, *The Honest Mind: The Thought and Work of Richard Price* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 187-210.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>38</sup> *A.O.*, 85-89.

<sup>39</sup> *O.N.C.L.*, 30.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 24-25.

<sup>42</sup> Richard Price, *A Fast Sermon*, in *Political Writings*, 105.

<sup>43</sup> Price to Benjamin Rush, 24 September 1787, 3:147.

<sup>44</sup> *A.O.*, 83.

<sup>45</sup> Price, *Correspondence*, 3:93 n. 3.

<sup>46</sup> Price to Lansdowne, 23 September 1787, 3:143-44.

<sup>47</sup> Price, "Journal," 381.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 394.

<sup>49</sup> Richard Price, "Richard Price and the Regency Crisis," in "Journal," 400.

<sup>50</sup> Richard Price, *Observations of the Importance of the American Revolution*, in *Political Writings*, 117.

<sup>51</sup> Albert Goodwin, *The Friends of Liberty: The English Democratic Movement in the Age of the French Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 71-73.

<sup>52</sup> Derek Jarrett, *The Begetters of Revolution: England's Involvement with France, 1759-1789* (Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman and Littlefield, 1973), 148.

<sup>53</sup> Goodwin, *Friends of Liberty*, 13.

<sup>54</sup> Morgan, *Memoirs*, 154-55.

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- <sup>55</sup> Price to Mathon de la Cour, 4 July 1789, 3:230.
- <sup>56</sup> Price to Thomas Jefferson, 3 August 1789, 3:247.
- <sup>57</sup> Morgan, *Memoirs*, 154-55.
- <sup>58</sup> Richard Price, *A Discourse on the Love of our Country*, in *Political Writings*, 177-81.
- <sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 185-88.
- <sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 189-92.
- <sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 193.
- <sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 195-96.
- <sup>63</sup> Morgan, *Memoirs*, 161.
- <sup>64</sup> Thomas, *Apostle of Liberty*, 124.
- <sup>65</sup> Revolution Society in London, introduction to *The Correspondence of the Revolution Society in London, with the National Assembly, and with Various Societies of the Friends of Liberty in France and England* (London, 1792), iii-vii (hereafter cited as *Corr. Rev. Soc.*).
- <sup>66</sup> *Corr. Rev. Soc.*, 2.
- <sup>67</sup> Richard Price, "Congratulatory Address to the National Assembly of France," in "Journal," 397.
- <sup>68</sup> *Corr. Rev. Soc.*, 7.
- <sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.
- <sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.
- <sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.
- <sup>72</sup> Richard Price, "Speech of 14 July 1790," in "Journal," 398-99.
- <sup>73</sup> *Corr. Rev. Soc.*, 105-7.
- <sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 142-43.

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<sup>75</sup> Dena Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1994), 2.

## CHAPTER 3

### CONDORCET AND THE SOCIAL ART OF FRIENDSHIP

The life and career of Marie-Jean-Antoine-Nicolas Caritat de Condorcet followed a similar pattern to that of Richard Price although Condorcet was born in 1743, twenty years after Price. The two men died only three years apart—Price in 1791 and Condorcet in 1794. Both men were regarded as leading mathematicians of their day and respectable scientists, and both men's academic careers were intertwined with their private associations. And both men considered themselves friends of liberty, although Condorcet more often referred to himself as an "*ami de la humanité*." The difference is subtle but important: Price and the English dissenters were primarily concerned with their political liberty, while Condorcet and his circle were concerned more with the general improvement of society and humanity rather than the expansion of political liberty. Most importantly, both men lived to see the French Revolution unfold, albeit from different vantage points. And for both men, the Revolution marked the high point of their radicalism. Price's thought had become more radical, and he eventually abandoned the idea of balanced government, as he became more disaffected with the inertia of the British government. So too did Condorcet become increasingly radical, albeit Condorcet's radicalization was more reluctant and even reactionary than Price. For Condorcet was a follower of Anne-Robert-Jacques Turgot, who believed that French society could be best enlightened through the tweaking of the existing monarchical

government in France. Turgot thought, and Condorcet later accepted the idea, that the monarch needed only regeneration, which could be done through an enlightened administration and an enlightened public. Thus Condorcet, following Turgot's example, was not a democrat—that is until the French Revolution forced democracy upon him. With the Revolution, Condorcet reluctantly accepted democracy, not necessarily because he embraced it as the best form of government, but primarily because he hoped to exercise some control over it.

Keith Baker, who has written the most authoritative book on Condorcet,<sup>1</sup> argues that Condorcet fused the scientific method with the study of society, which made Condorcet one of the first social scientists—and indeed, Condorcet was, most likely, the first person to refer to himself as a social scientist.<sup>2</sup> In 1793, Condorcet referred to this fusion of the two as the “science of social mathematics.”<sup>3</sup> As Baker convincingly proves, Condorcet's social mathematics arose not out of a single essay but over the progression of his life and thought. But the social mathematics was neither an exact science nor a popular science; rather it was a method of balancing future action against probable results, and it was performed by enlightened men who were meant to show the masses their true social interests. Social mathematics was meant to make laws rational and to give authority to those laws by their rationality. Social mathematics was consequently a method of bringing enlightenment to society without extending the decision-making process to the ignorant masses who were not yet ready for such responsibilities. But with the French Revolution, the people were in fact brought into the public domain by the revolutionaries with a nascent democratic republic. Since the people had not been made

ready for democracy, and Condorcet's social mathematics was never given its proper opportunity, Condorcet had to find some new "democratic art" to control the masses, as Baker explains.<sup>4</sup> This democratic art entailed the popularizing of social mathematics to be used in the daily activities of the masses. As Baker states, "Condorcet envisaged social mathematics as a science of individual conduct: a *common, everyday science* that would extend the bounds of reason in social affairs. The prevailing model of social science in Condorcet's earlier writings had been that of rational decision-making best carried out collectively by an enlightened elite. This conception was now explicitly broadened to produce a more generalized model of social decision-making."<sup>5</sup> Hence, Condorcet hoped to make the social mathematics a part of everyday life of the masses as well as the enlightened.

I agree with Baker's fundamental argument. I will, however, modify and expand his analysis of Condorcet's democratic art. I will first modify Baker's interpretation by using the expression "social art" rather than democratic art. Condorcet used the expression social art quite regularly, particularly after the beginning of the Revolution and especially in his *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind*. The term democratic art sets Condorcet's ideas too much in the context of the radical and popular politics of the Revolution, and it thereby implies that Condorcet's ideas on the matter arose within that context. I, however, will show that Condorcet's ideas about the social art developed over the course of his career, just as his social mathematics did. I will further show that friendship, and social intimacy in general, encompassed a significant part of Condorcet's social art—large enough that I refer to it as his social art

of friendship. So I accept Baker's framework for understanding Condorcet, and without rejecting any part of it, I will simply build upon it with an analysis of friendship as an integral part of Condorcet's thought.

Condorcet's social art of friendship developed gradually over the course of his life, and its formation is evident not just in his formal philosophical and political texts but also his private life. Condorcet was in many ways a tormented man. Condorcet's father, a military noble, was killed shortly after Condorcet's birth, and Condorcet's mother, reacting to the death of her second husband, found solace in extreme religious devotion. His mother smothered Condorcet with her fanatic religiosity. She attempted to hide him from God by disguising him as a girl until the age of eight, as she believed that God had been punishing her by taking her male kin. Thus, Condorcet grew up with a mother who straddled the line between insanity and religious fanaticism, and he would associate these two things for the rest of his life and eventually espouse atheism.<sup>6</sup> Condorcet would carry this troubled childhood around with him for the rest of his life. Only his closest friends truly understood his inner torment. Jean le Rond D'Alembert referred to him as a "snow-capped volcano," eliciting a serene, peaceful, and picturesque image that only hid the explosive and unpredictable nature of his character.<sup>7</sup>

Condorcet never truly overcame his solitary, lonely childhood, and he would be socially awkward for the rest of his life. He always felt ill at ease in society, but his introduction to salon culture provided him with a retreat into a world of friendship—a world he had never experienced as a child, and which consequently must have been even more fascinating for him. Condorcet came to Paris to establish himself as a

mathematician, and he was indeed recognized as a brilliant one with his important *Calcul Integral* published in 1765. Condorcet's mathematical abilities almost immediately caught the eye of d'Alembert, who set out to mentor Condorcet and who was himself a very capable mathematician.<sup>8</sup> The two men soon became close friends, and d'Alembert set out to nurture not just Condorcet's intellectual abilities but also his social abilities. And so d'Alembert introduced Condorcet to the Parisian salon culture. Julie-Jeanne-Eléanore de Lespinasse's salon was d'Alembert's favorite salon and it soon became Condorcet's too.<sup>9</sup>

D'Alembert was without question the single most formative figure in Condorcet's early career. Not only did he introduce Condorcet to Parisian philosophical and literary circles, but d'Alembert was also his first true friend, in Paris or elsewhere. Condorcet had had friendly relations with others before and been mentored by teachers, but his friendship with d'Alembert was the first friendship that he experienced as an equal in the relationship. Years later, Condorcet would write d'Alembert's eulogy—one of his official duties as secretary of the Academy of Sciences. In that eulogy, Condorcet followed the standard format of a lengthy list of d'Alembert's accomplishments, but he ended it with a warm tribute to his character. That tribute clearly shows that Condorcet valued d'Alembert not for any intellectual feats, but rather d'Alembert was a *grand homme* because he valued friendship and worked to perfect it as an art. As he explained, “*On peut juger du caractère des grands hommes par la liste de leurs amis,*”<sup>10</sup> and a man's character may also be judged by his participation in friendship. D'Alembert both kept good friends and was a good friend. For, “*Son amitié était active et même inquiète;*



*les affaires de ses amis l'occupaient, l'agitaient, et souvent troublaient son repos encore plus que le leur.*"<sup>11</sup> But d'Alembert's friendship was more than just personally rewarding; his friendship was Condorcet's model that he sought to emulate for the rest of his life, and Condorcet thought it should serve as the model for all philosophes. As he declared, "*la candeur et la noblesse de son caractère, de servir de modèle à ceux qui cultivent les sciences, et d'exemple aux philosophes qui cherchent le bonheur; ami constant de la vérité et des hommes;*" his friendship guaranteed that he will always "*vivre dans le coeur de ses amis, comme dans le mémoire des hommes.*"<sup>12</sup> D'Alembert was great because he was a great friend, and posterity will remember him for his example as a friend. Just as his friendship provided meaning to a tormented Condorcet, so too would it provide meaning to future generations of philosophes. D'Alembert was the model of friendship that Condorcet sought to emulate and spread as part of the project of Enlightenment. Advances in science would be remembered, but friendship will change men's hearts. As Condorcet believed, d'Alembert was a true "*Ami de l'humanité.*"<sup>13</sup>

D'Alembert, himself a well-respected scientist, converted Condorcet from the cause of science to the cause of society—that is, under his influence, Condorcet became a philosophe rather than a scientist and mathematician. As d'Alembert stated in his *Essai sur la société des gens de lettres et des grands*, the scientific community was simply the model for the Republic of Letters, which had to remain free from the vice of patronage and subordination to the court.<sup>14</sup> Equality and friendship had to be the basis of all relationships, and these values and characteristics directly opposed the entire system of eighteenth-century patronage. D'Alembert's *Essai* was a declaration of independence for

the Republic of Letters, which was based upon equality and friendship.<sup>15</sup> For, “the only great *seigneurs* with whom a man of letters ought to wish to commerce are those whom he can treat and regard in all security as his equals and his friends.”<sup>16</sup> But d’Alembert actually went one step further by declaring that the men of letters are actually superior to *les grands* and men of letters should define society because they practice “the art of instructing and enlightening men . . . the most noble attribute of the human condition.”<sup>17</sup> For d’Alembert, enlightenment was an art of instructing men on the merits of the values of equality and friendship, and Condorcet would abandon, more or less, his mathematical and scientific pursuits in order to pursue this art for the better part of his career.

D’Alembert also introduced Condorcet into the salon of Mlle de Lespinasse, and she took it upon herself to form the socially awkward Condorcet into the part of a philosophe. She admonished him not to bite his nails, not to slouch over when speaking to other people, and to look others in the eye during conversation. In other words, she tried to rid him of the diffidence from his lonely and unsociable childhood. As much as she tried to inculcate the skills of sociability into him, Lespinasse could not rid him of his uncomfortable manner. Condorcet only felt at ease with his small, intimate circle of friends that had formed in Lespinasse’s salon. That small circle of friends—which included d’Alembert; Turgot, when he was not in Limoges; Lespinasse; and Amélie Panckoucke Suard and Jean-Baptiste-Antoine Suard—was the only place where Condorcet lost his self-conscious and diffident manner. In his circle, he gained the greatest respect as a true friend and also the appellation *le bon Condorcet* for his constant efforts at effecting the public good and for his single-minded devotion to his friends.<sup>18</sup>

Lespinasse took it upon herself not only to teach Condorcet sociable, polite salon behavior, but she also hoped to teach him the “cultivation of the science of love.”<sup>19</sup> Much like Condorcet, Lespinasse also had an unhappy and lonely childhood and had known few friends before her entrance into the salon culture, and friendship was the main attraction of the Republic of Letters for her. For her, the salon was a community of friends, and the Republic of Letters was predicated upon friendship with its values of equality and reciprocity.<sup>20</sup> So she set out to teach Condorcet not only the sociable manners of salon culture but also the culture of friendship and its simultaneous values of benevolence and goodness to others. To the extent that friendship and its values were of primary importance to her is clear from a portrait of Condorcet that she wrote in 1775. In those nine pages, she used the words “*ami*,” “*amitié*,” or a variation of those words thirteen times. Lespinasse’s portrait clearly shows that she considered friendship to be one of the most important aspects of that behavior, which she worked diligently to inculcate into Condorcet. She recounted that: “*La figure de M. de Condorcet annonce la qualité la plus distinctive et la plus absolue de son âme, c’est la bonté; sa physionomie est douce et peu animée; il a de la simplicité et de la négligence dans de maintien . . . Il a reçu de la nature le plus grand esprit, le plus grand talent et la plus belle âme; son talent aurait suffi pour le rendre célèbre, et son sprit pour le faire rechercher; mais son âme lui fait des amis de tous ceux qui le connaissent un peu particulièrement.*”<sup>21</sup> Condorcet had a great mind and great talent, but the fact that his character won him friends easily was most important. She also praised him because “*sa bonté est universelle*” but it is

especially “*profond et active pour ses amis.*” In fact, he is a great man because friendship is an all-encompassing part of his life. For,

*Il est malheureux du malheur de ses amis, il souffre de leurs maux, et cela est si vrai que son repos et sa santé en sont souvent altérés. Vous croiriez peut-être, comme Montaigne, qu’une telle amitié peut se doubler et jamais se tripler? M. de Condorcet dément absolument la maxime de Montaigne: il aime beaucoup, et el aime beaucoup de gens. Ce n’est pas seulement un sentiment d’intérêt et de bienveillance qu’il a pour plusieurs personnes: c’est un sentiment profond, c’est un sentiment auquel il ferait des sacrifices, c’est un sentiment qui, dans tous les instants, satisfait la coeur de celui de ses amis qui vit avec lui.*<sup>22</sup>

And even though, Lespinasse continued, he loves so much, gives his love to so many, and sacrifices so much of himself for his friends, Condorcet never asks for anything from anyone in return.<sup>23</sup> In fact Lespinasse went on to declare that with his remarkable proclivity for friendship and its consequent universal benevolence, love, and good doing, Condorcet is the best of men; he, through his friendship and its values, had become a model not only for other men but for all of humanity.<sup>24</sup>

Condorcet was influenced, as are most people, by his early experiences. His miserable childhood—shaped by the lack of a father, a mother who bordered on insanity, and a friendless existence because of a smothering mother—bred in him an inveterate personal diffidence along with an utterly lonely and solitary existence. The salon culture, to which d’Alembert introduced him, was in many ways Condorcet’s escape to a world of friendship from his own inner life of loneliness. D’Alembert was an advocate for Condorcet without asking anything in return; he was an example of friendship to a man who had never known friendship; and his *Essai sur la société des gens de lettres et des grands* began the long process in which Condorcet formed his own ideas about the art of friendship and his hopes for its power to transform society. Condorcet thus admired

friendship, but it was Mlle de Lespinasse who took him under her charge and taught him how to be a friend. Under her influence, friendship took over his life; it was no longer part of his life—it was his life. By 1770, Condorcet had been introduced to the sociable world of friendship, but he had not become a philosophe in the sense of an active participant in a movement for reform and popularization. That transition came in September of 1770 when d'Alembert brought Condorcet with him on a pilgrimage to Ferney, where d'Alembert introduced Condorcet to Voltaire. Voltaire took an immediate liking to Condorcet, and the two became intimate friends. After his meeting with Voltaire, Condorcet would forever be in the vanguard of the movement for enlightened reform in France—that is, the moderate reform of d'Alembert, Turgot, and Voltaire, all of whom sought to reform the old regime from within.<sup>25</sup> Condorcet thereafter began the process of fusing his sociable friendship with his new political role. He was no longer a young, talented scientist and mathematician. He was, from the time of his Ferney pilgrimage to his death in the Revolution, a philosophe, but his politics would be shaped by his early experiences of friendship with d'Alembert and Lespinasse, which were in turn shaped by his solitary childhood.

With Voltaire's official stamp of approval, Condorcet became a leader of the moderate reform movement, and so Condorcet became a political figure. In 1774, Louis XVI came to the throne, and with him, the eventual appointment of Turgot as Controller-General. It seemed that the reformers were on the verge of infiltration of the old regime, and so d'Alembert decided to make a full assault on the Academy of Sciences to capture it for reform by making a move to have Condorcet elected permanent secretary of the

Academy, to which he had already been elected as a regular member in 1768. After a bitter battle, Condorcet was elected to permanent secretary in 1776, and he became a liaison for Turgot between the administration and the academy. Turgot and Condorcet, who were already friends, began a close working relationship to reform French society from within absolutism.<sup>26</sup>

Turgot influenced Condorcet with his ideas of the regeneration of the French monarchy through local provincial assemblies. But Turgot also introduced Condorcet to the idea of human progress, for which Condorcet would become best known, and he introduced Condorcet to the ideas of Richard Price, whom Condorcet came to admire.<sup>27</sup> Turgot taught him that knowledge and humanity were perfectible, that moral and political sciences should strive for the same certitude that the physical sciences enjoyed. So morality would advance with the example, method, and culture of science; for the “human race will necessarily progress toward happiness and perfection, as it has done in the knowledge of truth.” Humanity lost a great friend in Turgot, but Condorcet would try to carry out his work. As Condorcet stated, “Enlightened by his counsel, I would have seen better or further, and I would more confidently have advanced principles that would have been his own. Deprived of such a guide, I can only offer to his memory the homage of my work, making every effort to render it less unworthy of the friendship with which he honored me.” He claimed that he would miss Turgot, “whose teaching and example, and above all whose friendship I shall always mourn.”<sup>28</sup>

Turgot was much more than just an enlightened administrator for Condorcet—he was also an example of enlightened friendship. During his lifetime, Condorcet wrote

many biographies and lengthy biographical sketches as part of his official eulogies in his duties as secretary of the Academy of Sciences. Biographies were no doubt attractive to Condorcet because they allowed him to draw a picture of individuals and how they behaved toward their fellow men. Turgot affected Condorcet's thought, professional life, and social connections, but his friendship had the greatest effect on Condorcet. For his "friendship was so pleasant and so useful to me, and whose remembrance will ever afford one of those delicious but melancholy sentiments which come at last to make a part of our substance, and tend to endear to us our existence."<sup>29</sup> His friendship was the most enduring aspect of Turgot's character; it alone was indelibly marked on Condorcet's character. In fact, Condorcet continued that that "sentiment of friendship was the sweetest perhaps I ever felt," and it was "that sentiment which was the ruling principle of his life, the love of mankind, has alone prompted me to become his historian."<sup>30</sup> And friendship and sociability do seem to be at the center of all philosophy and human activity; for "sound philosophy" is simply "a system of morality, founded on a general fraternity of all the individuals of the human species; a system more universal, and better calculated to unite together men of all nations than the heathen morality" of Christianity.<sup>31</sup> So friendship for Turgot—or more appropriately as Condorcet perceived it—was an active part of philosophy that would help in the spread of enlightenment and peace. Consider this passage:

Friendship with M. Turgot was tender, active, and courageous. He employed in the affairs and pursuits of his friends a greater activity than is usual in the case of personal pursuits; and a delicacy that, in a strong mind, is a proof of a lively and profound sensibility. In misfortunes that regarded himself only, he preserved that tranquility which courage, supported and guided by reason, renders uniform; but be the misfortunes of his friends he was much agitated. Friendship did not make

him blind to their faults; he saw them, and he judged them with indulgence. . . . He readily tolerated in his friends, sentiments that were contrary to his own, provided they were adopted with sincerity, and were neither incompatible with true probity, nor dictated by interest or by meanness.<sup>32</sup>

Condorcet's close friendship with Turgot undoubtedly made Condorcet even more vehement in his defense of the minister's free grain trade policies. When Turgot came to power he immediately moved to free the grain trade, which set off another *guerre des farines* within the Republic of Letters. The first war of the grain trade occurred from 1770-71. The first war was sparked by Ferdinando Galiani's publication of his *Dialogues sur le commerce des blés* in which he attacked governmental policy that supported free trade, physiocratic economic ideas, and physiocrats' intellectual style. Galiani attacked the substance of the physiocrats' ideas, but he also understood that style of disputation was just as important. As Dena Goodman observes in her discussion of the event, "Substance and style . . . are not so easily separated."<sup>33</sup> Galiani attacked the physiocrats' style by arguing that they were too doctrinaire. He argued that ideas are indeed important, but that men of letters must submit their disputes to the rules of polite and civil conversation. That is, the discursive style of the Republic of Letters and its modes of friendship should take precedence over any particular idea, because without politeness and friendship, the very core of civil society was threatened. André Morellet, who was a friend of Galiani, and other physiocrats immediately struck back by attacking Galiani and his ideas of style over substance. Morellet argued that deregulating the grain trade went hand in hand with liberty and economic growth. He further claimed that the physiocrats' ideas were right and that style mattered little when the truth of ideas was at stake. But Morellet went beyond mere dispute; for he disagreed with Galiani's ideas, so



he did all he could to discredit Galiani's ideas, which included discrediting Galiani himself. To that end, Morellet's refutation took on a vitriolic tone, and he attacked Galiani as a specious thinker who foolishly valued style over substance. The philosophes felt betrayed by Morellet, whom they considered a friend and one of their own. The debate became vehemently personal, and personal relationships were forever destroyed. The language of friendship soon took hold of the debate. Galiani charged Morellet with *lèse-amitié*, and Denis Diderot wrote his *Apologie de l'abbé Galiani* as a defense of friendship and accused Morellet of violating the norms of friendship.

Condorcet managed to stay uninvolved in the first *guerre des farines*, but he could not stay out of the second war that raged from 1774-75 after Turgot came to power and freed the grain trade. There was immediately popular unrest as rumors of famine circulated. It was also rumored within philosophical circles that the banker Jacques Necker was circulating such rumors in order to undermine Turgot's policies. Condorcet came to Turgot's aid and vehemently attacked Necker and his ideas of grain regulation. Condorcet felt the same sense of betrayal by Necker's supposed machinations as Galiani had at Morellet's public disputation. Although Condorcet fell on the physiocrats' side of the issue on substance, he agreed with the philosophes' friendly, open style. But Condorcet too became carried away with passion as his friend Turgot seemingly came under attack from all sides. Condorcet used scathing personal attacks against Necker to defend Turgot and his policies. Condorcet finally realized that he had gone too far after his friends cautioned him to calm his rhetoric. The *guerre des farines* was too large of an event to go into here, but it was an important part of Condorcet's developing ideas of

friendship in two respects: first, the *guerre* led Condorcet to further question his own friendships and his understanding of friendship; and second, it ultimately led to Turgot's downfall, and with his downfall, Condorcet's retreat back into the academies to contemplate his understanding of friendship until the outbreak of the Revolution.<sup>34</sup>

The battle over the free trade of grain shook Condorcet's conceptions of friendship within the Republic of Letters, which he claimed as his own. Turgot's subsequent fall from power further shook Condorcet, and he became disaffected with public politics. He would retreat into the more secure environment of the academies for the next decade or so to contemplate what went wrong and how to fix it. He came to question the political system that would allow the great man of Turgot to fall from power.<sup>35</sup> How could society be so tantalizingly close to enlightenment and be on the path to perfection, and yet fall so far away from it? Regardless, friendship, or the lack of it, seemed to Condorcet to be at the root of all political questions. In considering these questions, Condorcet realized that progress came in ebbs and flows. He came to accept that there were two types of progress: progress in the moral sciences and progress in the physical sciences. He had too closely connected these ideas in his mind. While the physical sciences tended to progress steadily upward, the moral sciences were more likely to fluctuate in ebbs and flows, because they were more subject to the inveterate prejudices and passions of people—science, on the other hand, was more likely to be free from common prejudice. There was a cultural lag between advances in science and advances in morals, because morals were pulled down by the weight of habits and customs.<sup>36</sup> Condorcet finally understood that the moral sciences had to be approached in

a different manner; he recognized that to improve men's morals society's habits and customs had to change. By the time of the Revolution and with the acrimonious *guerre des farines* never far from his mind, Condorcet came to realize that the philosophes needed to instill the enlightened culture of friendship upon society. Obviously, that culture of friendship had failed the Republic of Letters, so he set out to perfect it as a social art, which was the primary task of his *Sketch*.

Condorcet continued in his duties as an academician both in the Academy of Sciences and in the French Academy, to which he was elected in 1782. But the French Revolution drew Condorcet back into public politics, much like it had Price. Condorcet's revolutionary activities are too many and too diverse to address entirely here, so I will give just a short summary to provide a framework for understanding the development of his ideas. Condorcet reluctantly became involved in the Revolution, as that he felt it was simply too important to ignore. Although not a member of the National Assembly, he took an active behind-the-scenes role in the Assembly, and he was later elected to the Legislative Assembly and then the National Convention. Condorcet tended to favor the more moderate Girondins but never officially joined the group. Condorcet, unaffiliated with any party, became known as a voice of reason and moderation, to the Girondins and to many of the radical Jacobins. His lack of party affiliation also saved him from arrest when the Jacobins ordered the Girondins expelled from the Convention. His reprieve was only momentary though, and an arrest order was issued on 8 July 1793 for Condorcet too when he spoke out against the radical Jacobin constitution.<sup>37</sup> Condorcet immediately

went into hiding with the assistance of some friends, and he began working on his masterpiece in which he would work out his ideas of the social art of friendship.

Condorcet is best remembered today for his *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind*, which is the most enduring statement of enlightened ideals more than an original document. He wrote the text while in hiding as an enemy of the Revolution and knowing that his days were limited, which makes the work all the more poignant. For Condorcet was, if nothing else, a quintessential optimist. Knowing that his fellow beings would take his life from him the moment that his hiding place was revealed, he still was able to sketch how humanity had progressed over the course of history, and beyond that, he even went so far as to argue that humanity would continue to progress indefinitely. Indeed, it does seem incredible that at the moment society was about to take his life he was able to defend humanity. The *Sketch* captivates the imagination because of the circumstances in which Condorcet wrote it; as one scholar explained: "The spectacle of Condorcet hiding . . . writing this enthusiastic sketch of human progress while the Revolution which he had befriended was seeking to kill him, is a scene of the same grandeur as that of Socrates discoursing on immortality while the jailer was preparing the hemlock, or of Jesus saying 'Forgive them Father,' as he was nailed to the Cross."<sup>38</sup> But it was because of his own fate that Condorcet felt he had to defend humanity against its detractors and also point to flaws and suggest corrections for the future progress of humanity and the perfectibility of man.

Probably because the positivists of the nineteenth century looked to Condorcet, as well as Turgot, as their intellectual forbearer, historians have generally viewed Condorcet

as being a founder of positivism. Most historians see his *Sketch* as a positivist manifesto and an elaborated and more advanced Baconian Atlantis, with an indefinitely greater control over nature with improvements in science until humankind has become the masters and possessors of nature. This is, however, a misrepresentation of Condorcet's masterpiece. Condorcet did envision science improving almost indefinitely and consequently the indefinite improvement of man's material condition, but he drew an important distinction between progress in science and the "progress of the human mind" and the "perfectibility of man." Condorcet accepts Lockean sensationalist psychology. Men's sensations are attended either by pleasure or pain, and he is "then able to experience these feelings when he either observes or recollects the pleasures and pains of other sentient beings. . . . Finally, as a consequence of this capacity and of his ability to form and combine ideas, there arise between him and his fellow-creatures ties of interest and duty, to which nature has wished to attach the most precious portion of our happiness and the most painful of our ills."<sup>39</sup> So by nature men have feelings of compassion for and duty to their fellow beings, but Condorcet chose not to study "these faculties, considering only what is common to all human beings," but rather the development of their manifestation "in a large number of individuals joined together in society." Only then does one see the true "picture of the progress of the human mind." Thus, Condorcet aimed to show that "nature has set no term to the perfection of human faculties; that the perfectibility of man is truly indefinite."<sup>40</sup> True progress is only "realized in a large number of individuals joined together in society," so society is the true crucible of

progress, and changes in social relations over time that are the most useful for considering the future advances of humanity.

Condorcet placed the progress of humanity in society and civilization, so he had to defend society against its detractors—for instance, Rousseau—and against its own inhumane and incriminating actions—such as the Revolutionary Terror from which Condorcet was hiding. Rousseau had claimed that “man was born free, and he is everywhere in chains;”<sup>41</sup> society and civilization had degraded men and made them weak, so that the solitary man was now the purest form of humanity. Though sympathetic to Rousseau and often critical of Voltaire for his attacks on Rousseau,<sup>42</sup> Condorcet felt he needed to defend society. In many ways, Rousseau’s attacks on the Republic of Letters were born out of his feeling of betrayal by his friends, especially Diderot. For Rousseau, the Republic of Letters was a Republic of Friends; as he said, he only wanted to love humanity if it only had let him. This sense of betrayal by people whom he had considered his closest friends instilled a paranoia in Rousseau from which he would never recover.<sup>43</sup> Though never estranged from his fellow men of letters, Condorcet too felt this same betrayal during the grain trade war.

Condorcet thus sought to reform social relations to show that the social art of friendship could make society more intimate, gentle, and refined, and he attempted to show that social intimacy and gentleness were uplifting and enlightening rather than degrading, as Rousseau argued. Communication was at the root of this social art, because it allowed social intimacy and friendship to spread beyond its previous limitations of primitive nomadic tribes that were unable to perfect the social art for lack

of communication due to their wandering lives. The formation of settled societies allowed for ideas to be “communicated more quickly and . . . perpetuated more surely in a society that had become more sedentary, more accessible and more intimate. . . . Man revealed himself to be distinct from the other species of animals and seemed no longer confined like them to a purely individual perfection.”<sup>44</sup>

Man’s highest perfection is reached, Condorcet thought, within society, which had become more perfect in Condorcet’s own time because advances in printing and literacy have increased the social intimacy. Yet, one major obstacle remained to the further perfection of the social art: inequality. No society, Condorcet thought, can increase its social intimacy without a corresponding increase of equality, which is also one of the primary tenets of friendship; social relations can never gain the increased intimacy that breeds refinement, knowledge, compassion, and concern for fellow creatures and ultimately humanity and enlightenment, without equality. Condorcet wrote that “the social art is the art of guaranteeing the preservation of these [political and human] rights and their distribution in the most equal fashion over the largest area.”<sup>45</sup> In fact, inequality presently exists only because of “the present imperfections in the social art” and “real equality” is “the final end of the social art.”<sup>46</sup>

Ultimately though, Condorcet’s social art of intimacy and equality had friendship as its final end. As the social art was perfected, so too would friendship be perfected, and people would consider themselves real friends not only to their immediate relations but to humanity itself. Just as Price by the time of the Revolution had turned to friendship for humanity as a way to supercede national politics and make society more humane, so too

did Condorcet. He made clear in the *Sketch* that he admired Price and the other British “friends of liberty”—although Condorcet preferred the term friend of humanity, because it does not confuse political independence with political liberty<sup>47</sup>—because they “preached the comforting doctrine of the brotherhood of man, whose gentle harmony should no longer be upset by the self-interest of nations” rather than the “corrupt political doctrines which looked for prosperity of a nation in the impoverishment of its neighbours.”<sup>48</sup> Politics was responsible for the enslavement of Africans and the degradation of women; only the friends of humanity, who valued friendship rather than politics, came to have any humanitarian concern for the treason against enlightenment and humanity that was slavery and sexual oppression. Because of their values of friendship, the friends of humanity and “the philosophers of different nations who considered the interests of the whole of humanity . . . [were] honoured to be called the *friends* of the black races.”<sup>49</sup> Instead of oppressing other peoples as Europeans have done to Africans and American Indians, “European nations” should “become their friends.”<sup>50</sup> There has been much done “for the progress of the human mind, but little for the perfection of the human race . . . something for his liberty, but so far almost nothing for his happiness. . . . and the friends of humanity can find unmixed pleasure only in tasting the sweet delights of hope for the future.”<sup>51</sup> Condorcet’s hope for the future was that the modes and habits of friendship would become the habits of humanity and spread the “habits of an active and enlightened benevolence;” he hoped that friendship would change “the motives that direct our feelings and our actions;” and he hoped that friendship would spread a brotherhood of nations.<sup>52</sup> For Condorcet, the social art was



friendship, and friendship was his hope for the future—a future he knew he would never live to see.

By March 1794, Condorcet had been declared an outlaw. This meant that anyone found harboring him could be executed without trial. Unwilling to risk the life of Mme Vernet, his protector, Condorcet decided to escape from Paris to the countryside, but before departing on that dangerous passage, he sat down to write a few words of advice for his daughter along with a last testament to ensure the proper care for her.<sup>53</sup> Just as Benedetto Croce appropriately refers to Condorcet's *Sketch* as the last will and testament of the Enlightenment because it is an all-encompassing final statement of the Enlightenment before it would be snubbed out by the French Revolution,<sup>54</sup> so too is Condorcet's literal final statement to his daughter reflective of his views of life.

Reading his advice to his daughter, one immediately imagines Condorcet, in hiding for eight months already, sitting up late at night in his candle-lit room slowly writing down his life's accumulation of wisdom to pass on to his daughter, not yet old enough to understand the complexities of her father's mind. Almost all of Condorcet's writing was contemplative, but his advice was the most introspective. He had obviously come to terms with death, which was surely to become his fate, and having written the *Sketch* for posterity, he now turned all of his attention to writing for his daughter. The advice has an eerie calm about it, tainted with a tinge of sadness. Condorcet resigned himself to his fate, but he was also grief-stricken by the prospects of leaving his daughter and wife behind. Condorcet began: "I am writing far away from you, indifferent to my own fate but preoccupied by yours and your mother's."<sup>55</sup> Condorcet's last thoughts were

naturally with his daughter, and he hoped to pass on his most valuable wisdom, of which friendship was at the center. He encouraged her to seek true friendships and to “Never forget that the person who receives is, in nature, the equal of the person who gives. . . . Enjoy the feelings of the people you love; but above all, enjoy your own. Think of their happiness, and your own will be your reward.” For “habitually performing good actions and behaving with loving affection are the purest and most enduring sources of happiness.”<sup>56</sup> He told his daughter that friendship and benevolence toward others mitigates all sorrow.<sup>57</sup> You should always strive to forget your own egoism, Condorcet used his last words to tell his daughter, because

This failing diminishes benevolence and harms and cools friendship. . . . Seek compensation for them [friendships and benevolence] in your own reason, which will assure you that they would be reciprocated, and in your heart, which will tell you that you do not need to be.

You will find that life in society is more pleasant and, dare I say, more convenient, if you live for others. Only then do you truly live for yourself.<sup>58</sup>

Even on the verge of death at the hands of a society that he had embraced, Condorcet used his last moments of life to encourage his daughter to embrace and love society and to be a friend of humanity. He encouraged her to form as many intimate friendships as possible and to make friendship a guiding force in all of her activities, from the mundane to the profound. Condorcet was identified only days after leaving his hiding place. It is uncertain how exactly Condorcet died. He was either killed in his cell, or by exposure from days on the run, or he committed suicide.<sup>59</sup> Despite his tragic death, Condorcet never gave up hope for humanity. Indeed, he was always a friend of humanity, and humanity needed only for someone to perfect the social art of friendship for there to be enlightenment.

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<sup>1</sup> Keith Michael Baker, *Condorcet: From Natural Philosophy to Social Mathematics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1975).

<sup>2</sup> Keith Michael Baker, "The Early History of the Term 'Social Science'" *Annals of Science* 20 (1964): 211-26.

<sup>3</sup> Condorcet, *A General View of the Science of Social Mathematics*, in *Condorcet: Selected Writings*, edited by Keith Michael Baker (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1976), 183-206.

<sup>4</sup> Baker, *Condorcet*, 329-35.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 339.

<sup>6</sup> J. Salwyn Schapiro, *Condorcet and the Rise of Liberalism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1934), 66-67.

<sup>7</sup> Frank E. Maue, *The Prophets of Paris* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962), 55-56.

<sup>8</sup> Schapiro, *Condorcet*, 67-69.

<sup>9</sup> Baker, *Condorcet*, 16-17, 23-35.

<sup>10</sup> Condorcet, *Oeuvres de Condorcet*, edited by A. Condorcet-O'Connor and F. Arago, 12 vols. (Paris, 1847-49), 3: 101 (hereafter cited as *O.C.*). Translation: "We can judge the character of great men by a list of their friends."

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 3: 103. Translation: "His friendship was active and even worried; the affairs of his friends occupied him, agitated him, and often troubled his rest more than his own."

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 3: 109. Translation: "The candor and nobility of his character, serves as a model to those who cultivate the sciences, and as an example to the philosophes who seek happiness; the constant friend of truth and mankind." . . . "living in the hearts of his friends, as in the memory of men."

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 3: 104.

<sup>14</sup> Baker, *Condorcet*, 12-16.

<sup>15</sup> Robert Darnton, *The Literary Underground of the Old Regime* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 13-15.

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<sup>16</sup> Quoted in Dena Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1994), 37-38.

<sup>17</sup> Quoted in *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>18</sup> Baker, *Condorcet*, 16-24.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>20</sup> Goodman, *Republic of Letters*, 83, 225.

<sup>21</sup> *O.C.*, 1: 626-27. Translation: "Condorcet's appearance announces the most distinctive and absolute quality of his soul, its goodness; his face is sweet and calm; there is simplicity and negligence in his deportment . . . he received from nature the greatest mind, the greatest talent and the finest soul; his talent would have sufficed to make him famous, and his mind to make him sought after; but his soul makes him friends of all those who know him at all."

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 628-29. Translation: "He is unhappy in the unhappiness of his friends, he suffers from their misfortunes, and it is true that his rest and health are often impaired. Should you think perhaps, like Montaigne, that such a friendship could double but never triple? M. de Condorcet absolutely refutes Montaigne's maxim: he loves much and he loves many people. It is not only a sentiment of interest and benevolence that he has for a few people: it is a profound sentiment, it is a sentiment to which he will make sacrifices, it is a sentiment that fills his soul and occupies his life, it is a sentiment that, in every instant, satisfies the heart of those of his friends that live with him."

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 630.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 634-35.

<sup>25</sup> Baker, *Condorcet*, 27-31.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 35-47.

<sup>27</sup> Translation of Condorcet, *The Life of Turgot, Comptroller General of the Finances of France, in the Years 1774, 1775, and 1776* (London: Printed for J. Johnson, 1787), 410-12.

<sup>28</sup> Condorcet, *Essay on the Application of Mathematics to the Theory of Decision-Making*, in *Selected Writings*, 33-34.

<sup>29</sup> Condorcet, *Life of Turgot*, x.

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 11-12.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 264-265.

<sup>33</sup> Goodman, *Republic of Letters*, 192.

<sup>34</sup> For a discussion of the *guerre des farines* and its impact on the Republic of Letters and Condorcet see Goodman, *Republic of Letters*, 183-232; Daniel Gordon, *Citizens without Sovereignty: Equality and Sociability in French Thought, 1670-1789* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 208-26; Baker, *Condorcet*, 57-72.

<sup>35</sup> Baker, *Condorcet*, 55-72.

<sup>36</sup> Charles Frankel, *The Faith of Reason: The Idea of Progress in the French Enlightenment* (New York: Octagon Books, 1969), 136-37.

<sup>37</sup> For Condorcet's role in the Revolution see Anne Elizabeth Burlingame, *Condorcet: The Torch Bearer of the French Revolution* (Boston: The Stratford Company, 1930).

<sup>38</sup> Quoted in Leonora Cohen Rosenfield, ed., *Condorcet Studies I* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1984), 11.

<sup>39</sup> Condorcet, *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind*, translated by June Barraclough and edited by Stuart Hampshire (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1955), 3-4.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 3-5.

<sup>41</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, translated by Maurice Cranston (New York: Penguin Books, 1968), 49.

<sup>42</sup> Condorcet to Turgot, 27 November 1770, in *Correspondance Inédite de Condorcet et de Turgot, 1770-1779*, edited by Charles Henry (Paris: Librairie Académique Didier, 1883), 20-21; also see Condorcet, *Sketch*, 130.

<sup>43</sup> For a discussion of Rousseau and the Republic of Letters, see Goodman, *Republic of Letters*, 54-73.

<sup>44</sup> Condorcet, *Sketch*, 6.

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 128.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 174.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 82.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 139.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 141, the emphasis is Condorcet's.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 177.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 169.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 192-95.

<sup>53</sup> Iain McLean and Fiona Hewit, eds., introduction to *Condorcet: Foundations of Social Choice and Political Theory* (Brookfield, Vermont: Edward Elgar, 1994), 30.

<sup>54</sup> Edward Goodell, *The Noble Philosopher: Condorcet and the Enlightenment* (Buffalo, New York: Prometheus Books, 1994), 12.

<sup>55</sup> Condorcet, "Condorcet's Advice to his Daughter," in *Foundations of Social Choice*, 284.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 286.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 287-88.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 289-90.

<sup>59</sup> Schapiro, *Condorcet*, 106-7.

## CHAPTER 4

### CONCLUSION

The eighteenth century was a crucial period in the development of modern political culture with its use of publicity and public criticism of the state. During the eighteenth century, this public criticism, so often forbidden by absolutist states, occurred in the sphere of private sociability, such as the salons and Republic of Letters. Within the private Republic of Letters, eighteenth-century intellectuals openly debated and criticized governmental policy. The men and women of letters thus effectively created a new public sphere; but the new public sphere was created within the confines of private life, so the political culture of the public sphere took on many of the social and cultural ideals of private sociability, such as politeness, reciprocity, equality, and friendship. The public sphere and private life thereby became intricately and inextricably intertwined. The men and women of the Republic of Letters especially came to value the private institution of friendship as a freely-formed, reciprocal, and equal association of friends. As the Republic of Letters increasingly claimed to represent the public as the only true representatives of the universal interests of humanity, it also increasingly represented itself as the only true friends of humanity and friends of liberty. As Dena Goodman argues, it was the project of the Enlightenment to transform the world to the values and practices of the Republic of Letters,<sup>1</sup> and friendship was one of the most important values within the republic.

Richard Price and Marie-Jean-Antoine-Nicolas Caritat de Condorcet both came to embrace this friendship-based Republic of Letters, and in many ways, both men represent the men of the late Enlightenment. Though Price's London was quite different from Condorcet's Paris, both men came to espouse an international outlook informed by the behavior and practices of friendship. By the time of the Revolution, both men had become disaffected with traditional politics. So as I have shown in this thesis through the two case studies of Price and Condorcet, there was a definite upward trend in the importance that Enlightenment intellectuals place on friendship as both a private and increasingly public and symbolic institution. Friendship was first an important part of their private lives of sociability, but as both men became increasingly disaffected with traditional politics, they began to consider ways in which modes of friendship could be adapted to the political public sphere. Both men initially accepted the ideals of friendship as explained by Aristotle in the ancient world and Montaigne in the modern world, but Price and Condorcet sought to expand upon those two great philosophers. For neither Aristotle nor Montaigne thought that friendship was possible on a large scale; both men thought that friendship had to be limited to a small, intimate group. It was the project of Condorcet and Price—and indeed, of the Enlightenment—to prove the two great men wrong. Both Price and Condorcet wanted to expand the sentiments of friendship beyond spatial and territorial boundaries. Friendship—not just to one's own circle of friends, but also to all of humanity—was to be the guiding force behind all human action. Price and Condorcet envisioned a world in which all people would be moved by a sense of genuine friendship for all other people, regardless of nationality, race, sex, or ideology.



Friendship was thus truly revolutionary, because it would change the way humans relate to their fellow beings. Friendship was thus an instrument of enlightenment and human improvement. Just as the Republic of Letters was international and without any national or otherwise particular interests, so too would the Republic of Friends be international and have only the universal interests of friendship toward humanity as its end. So friendship was an important part of the private sociable world of the Republic of Letters, but friendship also took on greater linguistic and symbolic meaning during the 1780s.

As Keith Baker argues, eighteenth-century political culture was essentially defined by language. He contends that language and other symbols give meaning to people's lives, and that people build their intellectual understanding of themselves and their world around these symbols, whether linguistic or otherwise. As he explains: "All social activity has a symbolic dimension that gives it meaning, just as all symbolic activity has a social dimension that gives it point."<sup>2</sup> Friendship was both a social and symbolic activity that gave both meaning and point to the lives and activities of the men and women of the eighteenth-century Republic of Letters. They formed meaning to their own private lives through the private institution of friendship, but they also understood friendship as a symbol that gave meaning and point to their public activities. Friendship became an important representation of equality, reciprocity, liberty, and humanitarianism. The symbol of friendship represented these values, and during the 1780s, the public and political manifestation of that symbol came with the expressions "friends of liberty" and "friends of humanity." As Price and Condorcet increasingly identified themselves with these expressions during the 1780s, the private institution of friendship increasingly

became a public symbol of enlightenment and enlightened values. Thus, friendship represented a revolution in the conceptualization of social relations in the pre-revolutionary years, both in England and France.

For Price, friendship was an ideal that he anticipated would change the way people conceived of their own existence. He hoped that people would give up traditional identifications associated with the artificial and corrupt institutions of states, and he hoped that instead people would come to identify themselves with their “body of companions and friends.”<sup>3</sup> Particularly after the outbreak of the French Revolution, Price sought to bring down traditional, non-friendship based identifications. He worked as a leading member of the London Revolution Society to foster friendships between the people of France and Britain. He hoped that the Revolution would finally bring a politics based upon friendship. For Price, friendship was an instrument of enlightenment that would effect his Empire of Peace and would change human relations; but most importantly, friendship was a symbol and representation of enlightenment against which all human activity should be judged.

Condorcet also saw friendship as a means to human improvement. In Condorcet’s thought and action, friendship became a social art in which friendship informed quotidian human activity, whether consciously or unconsciously. He thought that infusing a culture of friendship would ultimately fulfill the hopes of enlightened men and women everywhere. Even though Condorcet became an enemy of the Revolution, he still held out hope for the revolution that he befriended, because the French Revolution, unlike the American Revolution, truly changed “every social relation.”<sup>4</sup> Condorcet

worked for the fulfillment of his dream by publishing pamphlets and letters espousing the humane treatment of all human beings, including African slaves and women. For as he thought, all social relations should be based upon friendship, and only when every person considered themselves to be a friend of every other would the Revolution truly be complete. For Condorcet, friendship gave real meaning to his own social relations; but it also became a powerful symbol that shaped his own understanding of larger questions of human relations, and friendship became an important political symbol on which he would frequently call.

Price and Condorcet both used the symbol of friendship, but with different intonations and connotations. These differences in use of friendship are rooted in the variations of the Enlightenment in differing national contexts. The intellectuals of the British Enlightenment, as Roy Porter refers to it,<sup>5</sup> were more concerned with the expansion of political rights. Dissenters such as Price were particularly concerned with this, since they were excluded from politics with the Test and Corporation Acts. As Porter observes, “The grand problem facing the English intellectuals in the eighteenth century lay not in the need to criticise an old regime, or to design a new one at the drawing-board, but rather in making their reformed polity work.”<sup>6</sup> As I have already noted, Price and other British intellectuals typically referred to themselves as the friends of liberty, and thus friendship emerged as a symbol used to express the desire for expanded political liberties.

Condorcet and the French philosophes, on the other hand, often referred to themselves as friends of humanity, which they used to imply larger, more abstract, and

universal principles. Living in an absolutist state, Condorcet and his fellow philosophes never dreamed of an all inclusive political liberty, and indeed most of them would have opposed such measures. Without any real hopes, or even desires, of gaining full political liberty, the philosophes tended to focus on intellectual questions as fundamental in themselves.<sup>7</sup> The philosophes were also more likely to idealize their private lives of sociability and friendship as sufficient replacements to political activity.<sup>8</sup> This combination of intellectuality and the idealization of private life, including the institution of friendship, led the French philosophes to create an ideal symbol of friendship as the ultimate form of reciprocity, equality, and humanitarianism. This ideal symbol is manifested in the expression friends of humanity.

Regardless of the different uses of friendship in the late Enlightenment, friendship had indeed become part of the political culture. But Price and Condorcet were just two men that brought friendship into the political culture of the eighteenth century; obviously many people came to refer to themselves as the friends of liberty and the friends of humanity, especially in the 1780s. But once men like Price and Condorcet infused friendship into political culture it soon came to be used by many aspiring political and literary figures, or as Robert Darnton refers to them, “literary hacks.” As Darnton argues, by the 1780s, the Enlightenment had in many ways become integrated into the Old Regime as the philosophes had infiltrated the academies, government, and *le monde*. The philosophes of the “High Enlightenment” thus came to support and defend their own hierarchy by keeping out the younger hacks who came to Paris, like the older philosophes before them, to make a name for themselves. The Enlightenment was thus just as corrupt

and privileged as the Old Regime, and the hacks became increasingly disaffected and revolutionary. The aspiring literary and political hacks believed in the philosophy of the Enlightenment, but no longer accepted the philosophes legitimacy as leaders of the movement. With the Revolution, the aspirants finally had an opportunity to assert themselves, and as Darnton argues, they truly popularized the Enlightenment by taking their message straight to the people, rather than working through the establishment.<sup>9</sup> Just as the underground aspirants borrowed the ideas of the Enlightenment, so too did they borrow the political language of friendship. The literary and political hacks thereby transformed enlightened friendship into revolutionary friendship. Men like Jean Paul Marat and Thomas Paine began referring to themselves as friends of the people, and Marat even founded a newspaper titled *L'Ami du Peuple*. Marat and other aspirants borrowed the language of friendship, but their language of friendship became bellicose. The revolutionaries soon came to employ the full linguistic significance of the word friend. For they realized that the opposite of friend was enemy, and by thus employing the expression “friends of the people,” they were able, linguistically and symbolically, to distinguish the enemies of the people. Thus, the universal friendship of Price and Condorcet was turned on its head and used for the particular interests of the revolutionaries. Neither Price nor Condorcet would have ever referred to themselves as friends of the people, rather they were concerned with the “higher,” universal ideals of liberty and humanity. But as friendship became a part of political culture of the 1780s, it also became a part of the revolutionary culture of the 1790s. The culture of friendship in the context of the Revolution is too much to discuss in the context of this thesis, but

friendship did indeed play an important role in eighteenth-century political culture.

Friendship became particularly important as a symbol in the 1780s and 1790s, and a further examination of revolutionary friendship could very well provide a greater understanding of the problematic relationship between the Enlightenment and the French Revolution.

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<sup>1</sup> Dena Goodman, *The Republic of Letters: A Cultural History of the French Enlightenment* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 2.

<sup>2</sup> Keith Michael Baker, *Inventing the French Revolution: Essays on French Political Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 5.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Price, *A Discourse on the Love of our Country*, in *Political Writings*, edited by D. O. Thomas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 178.

<sup>4</sup> Marie-Jean-Antoine-Nicolas Caritat de Condorcet, *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind*, translated by June Barraclough with an introduction by Stuart Hampshire (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1955), 146.

<sup>5</sup> Roy Porter, *The Creation of the Modern World: The Untold Story of the British Enlightenment* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2000). Porter refers, rightfully in my mind, to a British Enlightenment rather than an English or Scottish Enlightenment. As he argues that many of the “English” intellectuals were actually Scottish or Welsh—Price being a prominent example of a Welsh intellectual who spent most of his life in England. He does distinguish a distinct Scottish Enlightenment, but he tends to use the term British Enlightenment instead of English Enlightenment. In making this argument, Porter implicitly and explicitly refutes J. C. D. Clark’s thesis that “Gentlemen, the Church of England, and the Crown commanded an intellectual and social hegemony” over English society (Clark, p. 7). Rather, Porter sees a “zest for change bubbling up in society at large” (Porter, p. 5). See, J. C. D. Clark, *English Society, 1688-1832: Ideology, Social Structure and Political Practice during the Ancien Regime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

<sup>6</sup> Roy Porter, *The Enlightenment* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, Inc., 1990), 54.

<sup>7</sup> Roy Porter and Mikuláš Teich, *The Enlightenment in National Context* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 43-45.

<sup>8</sup> Daniel Gordon, *Citizens without Sovereignty: Equality and Sociability in French Thought, 1670-1789* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 3.

<sup>9</sup> Robert Darnton, *The Literary Underground of the Old Regime* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 1-40.

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